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ABSTRACT

A case study was done on the effects of training programs sponsored by the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) on 835 women textile workers dislocated by a plant closing in Blount County, Tennessee. Data were gathered by former workers through structured interviews with 100 women typical by age (about 45-years-old) and length of service (14-16 years) in the plant. About half of the women in the sample enrolled in JTPA training programs or the high school equivalency program. Most of the programs were of short duration. The study found that the women who took the additional training thought they had more options for finding jobs; however, there were no significant differences in employment status at the time of the interview 20 months after the plant closing between those who had enrolled in training and those who had not. Although job training did open up new fields, a substantial number of the women ended up back in manufacturing, most at lower wages than they had been paid before. Nevertheless, a majority of the women who had gone through job training said they would do it again. Twelve recommendations were made, among them that JTPA should plan training based on the local job market, that the program should make individual counseling available, that training programs should be longer, and that low-cost health insurance and income maintenance should be offered to allow dislocated workers more time to train. (KC)

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"I'M NOT A QUITTER!"

JOB TRAINING AND BASIC EDUCATION FOR WOMEN TEXTILE WORKERS

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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PREFACE

It is always hard in a collaborative work to know whose names should be on the title page. The "authors" acknowledge here the important contributions which our collaborators have made to the study. Bingham Graves Pope conducted many of the exploratory and pilot interviews, helped us think through the issues and questions which the study should address, and supported and encouraged the effort throughout. She helped organize the Advisory Committee, encourage their participation, and keep them involved. Without her the study would have been the poorer.

Members of the Advisory Committee were: Teresa Blair, Faye Blankenship, Jo Anne Booker, Linda England, Marcella McKee, Norma Jennings and Shirley Martin. Several were also interviewers for the study. Without their insights, the design of the study, the questions we asked, and the conclusions we formed would have looked very different. Without their hard work, the study would have lacked some important elements. Without their cheerful encouragement, the study would not have been completed.

The study could not have been conducted without financial support from the Southeast Women's Employment Coalition (SWEC), and the contributions of their staff member, Barbara Smith. As a regional organization formed to address the special needs of women and jobs in the South, SWEC became interested in how the Job Training Partnership Act was meeting those needs. Our study is one of a series of case studies which SWEC planned. One other, in Greenville, South Carolina, has been conducted. Since SWEC no longer exists, anyone interested in the issue is encouraged to contact:

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SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Across the country, manufacturing workers have faced dislocation as their plants close. Often they have difficulty in finding new jobs. One of the major responsibilities of the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982 (later taken up by the Economic Dislocation and Worker Adjustment Assistance Act of 1989) was to retrain dislocated workers in new job skills. However, little research has been conducted on the impacts of job training on subsequent employment experiences of dislocated workers. In particular, the position of women has been poorly understood.

This study is a case history of one group of women workers, who lost their jobs in 1988 when a major apparel manufacturer closed a plant in Blount County, Tennessee. Women were a majority of the workers, and most had many years of experience at the plant. About half of the workforce took part in some aspect of the JTPA training program after the plant closed.[1]

The Center for Literacy Studies designed a study with three broad research questions in mind:

1. How do women perceive the options available to them when their plant closes, including retraining and education?

2. How do women make choices about participating in job training and education opportunities, and what are the barriers and constraints they face?

3. What difference does their participation in job training or education make in their subsequent employment experience?

A random sample of 100 women was interviewed in April-June, 1990, around twenty months after the plant closed. About half of those interviewed had taken part in some aspect of the training program offered by JTPA. The questionnaire used in the survey included both structured and open-ended questions. The study design was developed in collaboration with an Advisory Committee of women from the plant, some of whom were trained as interviewers for the survey. Their participation at all stages from initiation to conclusion was an important contribution to the study.

WOMEN'S PERCEPTIONS OF THE OPTIONS

How did women perceive the options available to them after the plant closed? Choices made and actions taken by the women can be more thoroughly understood by examining their perceptions of available jobs (with and without training), the perceived value of training, and their perceptions of the options presented by JTPA.

Women in the study had a fairly realistic view of the local job market open to them without retraining — they thought they could get other apparel jobs, similar jobs in manufacturing, or alternatively, low-paying service jobs.

With additional retraining, the women thought they had some different options. They split fairly evenly among: more skilled jobs in manufacturing; clerical or office jobs; and health service jobs. These perceptions closely follow the retraining options offered by JTPA, but do not appear to be closely connected with the actual local job market. Both the training offered and the perceptions of options are closely tied to traditional "women's work".

Recommendation # 1: JTPA should encourage women to plan training strategies based on the local job market and their personal aptitudes, rather than what is considered to be "appropriate" work for women. Training strategies could have been directed toward projected growth occupations in technical and paraprofessional fields and in sales, rather than the low-paying clerical and health service jobs.

Most women interviewed did perceive training as valuable to them in getting a new job. However, a substantial minority of those who

did enter job training had become somewhat disillusioned about the value of retraining by the time of interview. They came to perceive the local job market as having few opportunities, with or without training, and no longer blamed themselves or their lack of skills for difficulties in getting good jobs.

A large majority of the women interviewed said that they did not fully understand the options offered to them by JTPA. This included both those who enrolled in training and those who did not. Indeed, more of those who enrolled in training said they did not understand the JTPA options than those who did not take training — a case of familiarity breeding confusion.

The JTPA program did not provide individualized counseling for women concerning their skills and opportunities. This lack had a major influence on how the women perceived options as well as how they made choices among them.

> **Recommendation # 2: Individual counseling is needed for women to make good decisions about training opportunities, based on the local availability of jobs related to the training, the everyday realities of those jobs, and their own individual skills, aptitudes and experience.**

MAKING CHOICES/BARRIERS TO RETRAINING

> *What situational and/or psychological barriers constrained the forty-nine women who chose not to go for job training? We examined socio-economic factors, demographic factors such as age and family obligations, and attitudinal factors.*

The major barrier to enrolling in training was the need to get another job immediately, whether to maintain family income or provide health insurance.

> **Recommendation # 3: JTPA should look for creative ways to assure displaced workers of income support over a long enough period, and at an adequate level, to enable them to undertake substantive retraining programs.**

> **Recommendation # 4: Affordable health insurance should be offered to women who are receiving unemployment benefits and are enrolled in training. This would both remove a barrier and be a significant incentive for more women to retrain.**

Demographic factors such as age, marital status and dependent children were not the barriers to enrollment in training that we had expected. However, we did find that while age itself was not significant, perception of age was a barrier to retraining. Those who agreed with the statement, "I was too old to go back to school" were

much less likely to have enrolled in training. Other attitudes were also important, including memories of earlier public school experiences and the perception of friends involved in retraining.

Prior education level was not the barrier we had expected to enrolling in training opportunities. Substantial numbers of women who had not graduated high school took this chance to enroll in GED classes when the plant closed. However, prior education was a barrier to *job training* in particular, since JTPA required all those who did not have a high school diploma to get their GED *before* they could enroll in job training classes. Although over half of the eligible women did enroll in GED classes, many of them did not get over the GED hurdle before the money ran out for retraining.

> **Recommendation # 5: GED preparation should be integrated with job skill training, and provided on an intensive basis, so that lack of basic skills is not a barrier to job training.**

TRAINING AND JOBS

> *What impact did training have on the subsequent employment experiences of the women in our study? In particular, how did job training or GED classes affect the women's employment status, the types of jobs they found, the changes in wages/ benefits of these jobs, and their level of job satisfaction? What did the women feel to be the actual value of the training in relation to the jobs they obtained?*

There were no significant differences in employment status at time of interview, some twenty months after the plant closed, between those who had enrolled in training and those who did not. Just over half of those interviewed had a full-time job, another 8 percent a part-time job, and 19 percent were unemployed. Others were still in school, retired or disabled.

Among those who had enrolled in job training, the full-time employment rate was lowest for the non-completers, and highest for those who had taken longer-term training (more than 3 months).

> **Recommendation # 6: More longer-term training should be offered to displaced workers, along with counseling about ongoing financial aid for those who wish to continue in school beyond the period covered by unemployment pay.**

Job training did apparently open up a wider range of job options: those who enrolled in job training programs had a greater diversity of jobs than those who did not train at all, or who enrolled in GED classes. However, substantial numbers of women who trained in a new field ended up back in manufacturing jobs.

> **Recommendation # 7: JTPA is already evaluated on its placement record; we suggest that programs should be evaluated on the basis of placement in jobs for which participants have been trained.**

A large majority of women in our study lost wages. Average hourly wages declined from $7.08 in the last job with The Company to $5.36 in their first new job. Overall, 14 percent of women were making less than $4.00 an hour in their new job, close to minimum wage, and 42 per cent were making less than $5.00 per hour.

Job training does not seem to have prevented wage loss significantly: three quarters of those who enrolled in job training lost wages. However, those who enrolled in GED classes, more of whom stayed in manufacturing jobs, were somewhat more likely to maintain similar wage levels than those who entered job training (only 58 percent of the GED enrollees experienced wage loss).

> **Recommendation # 8: We propose that JTPA should also be evaluated on the wage levels of the placements made. Training which leads to close to minimum wage jobs may not be a good investment of the women's time or government funds.**

Many women lost the benefits of their former job (union representation, employer-paid health insurance). Those who enrolled in job training programs did not experience any better benefits in their new job than those who did not train.

More than half the women interviewed liked their new job less than their old. There are some significant differences in job satisfaction for those who trained: more of them liked their new job more than did those who did not train.

PARTICIPANTS EVALUATIONS OF JTPA PROGRAMS

> *Job training and GED participants were asked to evaluate JTPA on the basis of what they found most helpful and least helpful about the program. They had many suggestions for program changes.*

Despite some qualms about the power of training in the local job market, a majority of women who had gone through any of the JTPA programs said they would do it again. They felt that training was a necessary (but perhaps not sufficient) condition to getting a good job, or that they had enjoyed learning something new.

The training programs were the most appreciated aspect of JTPA's programs. Apparently, though, the JTPA program did little to actually assist people in getting a job (only 4 of the 70 women who had held a job since the plant closing said they had found it with JTPA assistance).

> **Recommendation # 9: JTPA needs to provide more help with job searches, especially after the training is completed.**

Program participants pointed out a range of problems they had experienced with the JTPA programs, ranging from confusing and contradictory information from different staff members to poor quality instructors in the training programs.

Participants had many suggestions for ways the JTPA program could be changed to better meet the needs of women like themselves. These ranged from provision of individual counseling, more on-the-job and more long-term training programs, to a closer fit between training opportunities and the local job market.

Participants also pointed to problems in the way staff dealt with them, in particular unemployment office staff whom they felt lacked respect, sympathy and understanding of their situation. Some also felt that the teachers provided by the contractors were too used to working with young people, and did not know how to respond to adult learners.

Recommendation # 10: All unemployment office staff who come into contact with displaced workers should have training, incentives and supervision geared to better public relations.

Recommendation # 11: All JTPA contractors should provide training in principles of adult education for all teachers of displaced workers.

Finally, the personal distress which many women felt pervaded their experience for almost two years following the plant closing. Many people described increased personal and family problems, and many would have welcomed professional counseling if it had been available at low cost, and on an individual and confidential basis.

Recommendation # 12: Community mental health agencies should be made more aware of the problems of displaced workers, and the fact that their problems are not always quickly resolved. Such agencies should be encouraged to offer affordable, private counseling for a considerable period of time after the plant closing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation # 1: JTPA should encourage women to plan training strategies based on the local job market and their personal aptitudes, rather than what is considered to be "appropriate" work for women. Training strategies could have been directed toward projected growth occupations in technical and paraprofessional fields and in sales, rather than the low-paying clerical and health service jobs.

Recommendation # 2: Individual counseling is needed for women to make good decisions about training opportunities, based on the local availability of jobs related to the training, the everyday realities of those jobs, and their own individual skills, aptitudes and experience.

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Recommendation # 5: GED preparation should be integrated with job skill training, and provided on an intensive basis, so that lack of basic skills is not a barrier to job training.

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INTRODUCTION

In September of 1988, a major national jeans manufacturer announced the closure of its plant in Blount County, Tennessee. Over 800 workers were to be laid off, most of them women. The closure was not only devastating to the workers involved, it also encapsulated major structural economic changes taking place in the South and across the country. In the last decade, manufacturing companies have been relocating and automating, and as a result production jobs have been lost. New jobs replacing them are often lower-paid service jobs, many of them part-time. In the South, 155,000 textile and apparel jobs were lost between 1970 and 1985, and the jobs continue to leave.[2] As the jobs have been lost, many workers have had to start over.

This study presents a case history of one group of women textile workers who lost their jobs when their plant closed in 1988. In particular, the study looks at the impact of job training and remedial basic skills classes in facilitating their switch into different jobs.

THE COMPANY

The Company, founded in the mid-nineteenth century, and run on paternalistic lines with a devotion to quality but not fashion, began

to run into trouble in the 1980's. Its dependence on the jeans market was vulnerable to fashion changes. As sales fell, net income declined sharply, and The Company began to consolidate operations by closing plants. During the 1980's, The Company reduced its workforce from 48,000 to 32,000, closing 41 of its U.S. plants, two of them in East Tennessee.[3] Other U.S. plants were increasingly automated, to increase productivity. While The Company was closing U.S. plants, it was opening new ones overseas. Like the rest of the U.S. apparel industry, it moved overseas looking for cheaper labor.

THE COMMUNITY

Blount County, Tennessee, is a once-rural county, much of which now lies within the metropolitan area of Knoxville. For many years the largest employer of male workers was the Aluminum Company of America, after whom the town of Alcoa was named. In the last ten years, employment at Alcoa has dropped sharply, as that company has shifted more production overseas and automated. Blount County has maintained its focus on manufacturing, however, as a number of new factories have opened, some of them high-tech operations.

Because of its position on the edge of a metropolitan area, Blount County's employment pattern is more varied than that of most rural counties in the state. Nevertheless, Blount County is more dependent on manufacturing jobs than most urban counties. Thirty-two percent of all jobs in the county in 1985 were in manufacturing, compared with less than 20 percent of jobs in its urban neighbor, Knox County. Twenty-five percent of Blount County jobs were in trade, 13 percent in service industries, and 14 percent were government jobs. Many Blount Countians commute to work in Knox County, where the variety of jobs is greater, or to Oak Ridge where there is a large defense facility.

Blount County, like East Tennessee generally, is predominantly white (less than 4 percent non-white in 1980). Its average per capita income is around the state average of $12,819, and 10 percent of families live below the poverty line — not exceptionally high by state standards. Unemployment in 1988 when the plant closed was also about the state average, at 5.7 percent. However the average unemployment rate for 1989 exceeded the state average, climbing to 6.8 percent.

THE WORKERS

The plant closing presented many problems for the 835 displaced workers. The Company reported in the press that the average age of its workers at the plant was 45 years.[4] Ninety-two percent were women, and most had been with The Company 14-16 years. Finding new jobs was expected to be hard, the normal difficulties of displaced workers being made greater by their age, their gender, and their low levels of formal education.[5]

DISLOCATED WORKERS

Dislocated workers have become a major phenomenon in this country in the last decade. The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) of 1982 defines displaced workers as those who are:

> 1. Terminated or laid off, [have] exhausted their unemployment compensation, and [are] unlikely to return to their former occupation;
> 2. Terminated as a result of permanent plant closing;
> 3. Long-term unemployed with limited opportunities for employment in their former occupation (including those with barriers such as age). (Sec. 302)

In the five years from 1979 to 1984, the Census estimates that 11.5 million workers lost their jobs because of plant closings or major layoffs.[6] The Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) of the U.S. Congress reviewed existing research on displaced workers. It reports that displaced workers are "typically white males, of prime working age with a steady work history in a blue-collar job in the Midwest or Northeast."[7] However, a third of displaced workers are women, and OTA notes that women and minorities "fared significantly worse than white men in regaining employment after being displaced."

Studies of displaced workers have consistently found that many experience long periods of unemployment, and wage and benefit losses when they do find employment. A Census Bureau survey found that a quarter of displaced workers in the 1979-1984 period were out of work for a year or more.[8] The survey found that 45 percent of displaced workers had to take a pay cut when they did find a new job. Two-thirds of these were earning less than 80 percent of their former income.

OTA notes that displaced workers in the East South Central region (Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky and Tennessee) have a high rate of persistent unemployment after lay-off. The South particularly has experienced some major shifts in employment patterns in recent years. In 1970, almost a third of Southern workers were employed in manufacturing, with textile, apparel and furniture being key industries. By 1990, the Institute for Southern Studies reports that fewer than one in five Southern workers held production jobs.[9] While new jobs are being created in the region to "replace" the manufacturing jobs lost, five out of six new jobs have been in services or trade, both usually with lower pay and with fewer benefits.

THE CHANGING ECONOMY

Tennessee employment projections into the 1990's show rapid growth in services and retail trade, and continuing decline in manufacturing. Service jobs were projected to grow from 26 percent of all jobs in the state in 1985 to 29 percent in 1995; retail trade jobs were projected to grow from 17.3 percent in 1985 to 19.4 percent in 1995.[10] In contrast, manufacturing jobs were projected to decline from 26.3 percent in 1985 to 22.7 percent of jobs statewide in 1995.

Table 1. Projected Growth Occupations, Knox and Blount Counties, shows that in the area in which most of the workers from The Company would have been job-hunting, very little growth is projected in either production jobs or clerical/ administrative support jobs. The highest growth rates were expected to be in professional, paraprofessional and technical jobs, service jobs, and in sales.

TABLE 1. Projected growth occupations, Knox and Blount Counties

	PROJ. 1995 EMPLOYMENT	PERCENT OF TOTAL	PERCENT CHANGE
TOTAL, ALL OCCUP.	191,910	100.0%	6.9%
Managerial	11,645	6.1%	9.3%
Prof/paraprof/tech	32,580	17.0%	10.1%
Sales & related	23,550	12.3%	12.2%
Clerical/admin supp	31,720	16.5%	2.8%
Service	32,155	16.8%	12.6%
Agric/forest/fishing	765	0.4%	-12.6%
Prod/Operative/Maint	59,495	31.0%	2.5%

Source: TN Dept. of Employment Security (1988), Tennessee Employment Projections 1995 and 1995: East Tennessee Substate Areas, Table 18 p.90.

However, the greatest *numbers* of jobs in an area are not necessarily the same as the greatest percentage *growth rate*. In this two-county area, the greatest numbers of jobs are still projected to be in manufacturing, along with professional/ paraprofessional/technical jobs, service jobs and clerical/ administrative support jobs.

It is also important to look not just at projections but at the list of the actual "Occupations in Demand" at the Tennessee Department of Employment Security. Table 2. Job Openings, SDA 4. Second Quarter, 1989, which includes Blount County, shows the largest number of openings were in manufacturing, construction and trade. Wage levels outside manufacturing were generally low. This was a period in which many of the displaced Company workers were looking for employment, because their unemployment benefits were running out.

TABLE 2. Job Openings, SDA 4, Second Quarter, 1989

	JOB OPENINGS	AVERAGE WAGE/HR
Assembler/Production	88	6.27
Construction Wkr 1	99	4.80
Material Handler	43	4.39
Cook	43	3.85
Cashier-checker	83	3.59
Kitchen Helper	39	3.50
Counter Attend: (lunch)	36	3.48
Sewing-machine oper.	34	3.42
Clerk, general	38	3.41
Waiter/ress Informal	51	2.52

Source: Labor Market Information Unit, TN Dept. of Employment Security, Occupations in Demand at Tennessee Department of Employment Security, Second Quarter, 1989.

THE JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT

In the shift from a manufacturing-based to a service-based economy, displaced workers experience many problems. Job training to prepare them for new kinds of jobs is often suggested as the answer to many of these problems. Title III of the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982 was devoted to retraining and job placement programs for displaced workers. This title of the JTPA Act has since been replaced by the Economic Dislocation and Worker Adjustment Assistance Act of 1989; the new program, which was not in place at the time of the plant closing in this study, is also administered in Tennessee by JTPA agencies.

Between its passage in 1983 and 1989, the GAO reports that JTPA has allocated nearly $10 billion to state and local agencies to provide job training to about five million unskilled and economically disadvantaged individuals, including displaced workers, in order to obtain employment.[11] Under JTPA, employment services are provided by over 600 local Service Delivery Areas (SDAs). The services, provided in classroom settings or on-the-job training, include remedial education, training for specific jobs, and assistance in job search.

Throughout its history, JTPA has been accused of "creaming" off applicants most likely to succeed in finding a job, while avoiding applicants who because of age, education level or other factors are likely to be harder to place. Such creaming is built into a program which has strong "performance standards" based on placement rates in actual jobs.

In response to these issues, Congress asked the GAO to study JTPA programs and their services for hard-to-serve participants. The GAO concluded that JTPA programs invested fewer resources in serving the less job-ready: in particular, high school dropouts were under-served and received little remedial education. Less job-ready participants were less likely to receive occupational training than their more job-ready counterparts. The GAO also found that men in JTPA programs tended to receive more on-the-job training than women, who were more likely to be trained in classroom settings.[12]

In Tennessee, JTPA programs are administered statewide by the Department of Labor, via 14 Service Delivery Areas (SDAs). Each SDA has a Private Industry Council which oversees the program, consisting of representatives from business and industry, other agencies, unions and the general public. Blount County is contained within SDA # 4, which encompasses a large and mainly rural set of 8 counties. Roane State Community College in Roane County is the administrative headquarters for this SDA.

THE PLANT CLOSING

When the plant closing was announced, the JTPA Service Delivery Area (SDA) and The Company came together to plan a closure package which they hoped would enable workers to move quickly and successfully into other jobs. By this time, The Company had had plenty of experience with plant closures, but the SDA had little prior experience of plant closing on this scale.

The Company announced it was spending $6 million to close the plant, including paying 12 weeks "notification" pay and continuing benefits to all workers, and additional severance pay based on length of service (one week's pay for each year of service). The Company also hired an "out-placement consultant" who provided some counseling on-site for three months.

JTPA provided "transition classes" to assist workers with the transition back into the job market and with job search skills, which met for three hours twice a week, for about a month. Remedial basic education was offered through the local ABE program, and job training programs were offered through several contractors (including a community college and vocational training school). The transition classes and some GED classes were held at the plant until the end of December, and The Company provided utilities and security during this period.

The workers were given a form by JTPA on which they were asked their interest in various kinds of assistance offered by JTPA, including skill training, GED classes, job search assistance, job transition training and relocation assistance. Those interested in skill training were asked the type of skill they were interested in. According to JTPA staff, an attempt was made to meet the requests, including setting up an additional Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) class at the University of Tennessee Medical Center, because of limited openings in existing classes and considerable interest in this area of training. On the other hand, interest in welding and cosmetology were discouraged because JTPA felt the job market for these occupations was saturated.

A year after the plant closing, JTPA estimated that it had served approximately 400 of the 835 workers. These included 85 people who took the GED test (73 passed), 21 who were in pre-GED classes and 9 in literacy classes. About 120 people had enrolled in the job transition classes.

THE STUDY

Soon after the plant closing, the Center for Literacy Studies was engaged in a study of linkages between education and the economy in Tennessee, in the light of the significant structural changes affecting workers in the state. We were curious as to whether retraining or remedial basic education would make a significant difference to workers' ability to get a new job, or to the kind of job they could obtain. As women, we were especially interested in the situation of women, and as a literacy research center we were particularly interested in whether low levels of formal education affected either participation in job training or subsequent employment.

Living and working close to Blount County, and knowing a few individuals who had been displaced, we became interested in a study focussing on this particular plant closing. Here was a large workforce displaced from their jobs, mainly women, and many with relatively low levels of formal education.

We began talking informally with women who had worked at the jeans factory. As we talked, we found that this group of women was smart, feisty, thoughtful, as well as angry about what had happened

to them. They had their own questions and their own perspectives on the closing and the training program. We asked a group of six women from the plant to meet with us to help us design the study. Short of time, with family obligations, they agreed to come to one meeting only. But at that one meeting they took an initiative and an interest in the study which they never lost. They became a formal Advisory Committee which met many times.

As we sought funding to carry out the main survey after many months of talking with women from the plant, we found that the Southeast Women's Employment Coalition (SWEC) was planning a research project on the impact of JTPA programs on women in the South. We were able to team up with SWEC and conduct our study as one of a series of case studies on JTPA and women in the South, which they funded and helped develop.

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

As finally constituted, the study addresses three broad research questions about working class women, education and jobs:

> *1. How do women perceive the options available to them when their plant closes, including retraining and education?*
> *2. How do women make choices about participating or not participating in training and education opportunities?*
> *3. What differences do their participation in training or education make in their subsequent employment experiences?*

The methodology used was a fairly conventional survey format, with a difference. The difference lies in the collaborative approach. Mainstream social science research methodologies have commonly attempted to apply the standards of "objectivity" as well as the methods of the natural sciences to social phenomena. They try to separate researcher from subject, and to value "expert" knowledge over experience. Criticism of this positivist tradition has come from marxists, feminists, critical theorists and others. Many of the critics wish to combine an approach to research which avoids the mainstream commitment to domination and social control, and which values experience-based knowledge, while retaining positivist ideals of critical, rigorous and open-minded inquiry. A collaborative approach can meet these goals.

Both action research and participatory research traditions place importance on collaborative forms of inquiry. In participatory research, for example, "the researchers and the researched cooperate in a joint process of critically understanding and changing the social situation, so as to improve people's daily lives, empower them and demystify research."[13] In action research the empowerment and demystification aspects have not necessarily been present, but collaborative research methods have still been seen as producing better results.[14]

As Cancian and Armstead suggest, participatory research allows for a range in the degree of participation and control over the research process by the community. In this study, the Advisory Committee has had a considerable degree of influence over the research design and conduct of the study, as well as conclusions and recommenda-

tions of the report, but they did not have full control. Ultimately in an academic setting, control and accountability rest primarily within the university rather than an outside body.

We feel the collaborative approach has produced richer and fuller research than a conventional university-based study would have produced, and that the collaborative methods used are entirely feasible for others working in academic settings. At the same time, the study met our desire for a rigorous and critical form of inquiry.

The sample for our study was drawn from a list of all 835 employed at the time of closing. Men, and the women with whom we had conducted preliminary interviews, were removed from the list before numbering, and a random number list was generated to select names. A total of 203 names were selected for the 100 completed interviews. Of these, 19 were ineligible because they had retired or left the plant at the time of closure; another 30 refused to be interviewed for a variety of reasons; and we were unable to contact 54 people (because they had moved without forwarding address, or because the listed address was inaccurate). Based on the only two pieces of data which we had for the total workforce, age and length of work at the factory, our interviewees are typical of the larger workforce at the time the plant closed.[15] In addition, the rate of participation in JTPA programs was the same for our sample as for the total workforce: around 50 percent.

A questionnaire was developed in consultation with the Advisory Committee, and was pilot tested with other workers from the plant.

The Advisory Committee debated at some length the relative advantages of interviews being conducted by "objective" strangers, or by familiar former co-workers who understood many of the problems they experienced. We thought that respondents would be more at ease with a co-worker, would be more likely to agree to be interviewed and would perhaps volunteer more information. But we were concerned that certain respondents might feel antagonisms based on prior relationships with interviewers, and also that respondents might be afraid that their former co-workers would gossip, and so information would not be treated in confidence.

On balance we decided that there were more advantages than disadvantages to using workers as interviewers. We tried to minimize the disadvantages by screening carefully the match of interviewers with respondents, by asking interviewers to sign a written agreement that study findings would be held in confidence, and by assuring respondents by letter and in person that their answers would be kept confidential. Five members of the Advisory Committee became interviewers in the study, and underwent two training sessions in interviewing skills.

The final questionnaire consisted of four sections. The first dealt with the time when the plant closed, with people's perceptions of the options available to them, their feelings, and their participation in JTPA programs. The second section focused on attitudes toward education and training, measured on a five point Likert-type scale. The third section asked participants to evaluate the JTPA programs, and was completed only by those respondents who had participated

in training or remedial education. The final section dealt with their employment history, and any problems experienced since the plant closing.

As a whole, the questionnaire included both open-ended and structured questions, and the interviewers gave respondents additional space to "tell their stories" if they wished. Interviews were all conducted in person, some in the respondents' homes, others in a neutral meeting ground like a restaurant. Center for Literacy Studies staff conducted quality control checks by phone on a ten percent sample of completed questionnaires.

It very quickly became clear to all of us that the participation of the Advisory Committee made it a better study. Our final response rates were good, and many of the interviews documented stories beyond the specific questions asked, enriching the data obtained. With the Advisory Committee's help, our simple initial research questions became more complex and subtle. They made us look at women's perceptions of the options open to them at the time the plant closed, at the effects of the stress and distress of the closing itself on their perceptions and their ability to make choices. They made us think about the community context in which they lived and tried to work. And they made us look at the costs these women paid.

OTHER STUDIES

Few other studies have focused on the training experiences of women displaced workers. However, studies in several areas have insights which relate to our interests: plant closing studies (especially those involving similar workforces to ours); adult education research on motivation and barriers to enrolling in education; evaluations of general employment and training programs (not specifically for displaced workers); and evaluations of displaced worker training and assistance programs.

Studies of plant closings usually examine displaced workers' length of unemployment, wage losses and stress. Like Cochrane's study of women garment workers, plant closings studies find that displaced workers commonly suffer long periods of unemployment and significant wage losses, and that women, minorities and older workers are particularly hard-hit.[16]

The most relevant of the plant closing studies describe similar populations. Gaventa studied a group of mainly women textile workers in Knoxville, Tennessee, who were laid off when their plant closed in 1985.[17] As in other studies of dislocated workers, he found these women experienced great difficulty in finding full-time jobs. Like the women in our own study, they had worked an average of 14 years at the plant before it closed. Although 92 percent of the workers he surveyed had actively sought new jobs since the closing, only 56 percent had been able to find a job. Of these, less than half had been able to find full-time work.

Most lost wages significantly: all but one worker he surveyed had lost wages, and the average wage cut was one third. The plant closing not only reduced wage level, but also increased stratification, related both to age and gender. Unlike the women in our study, only a

handful of the workers Gaventa surveyed had been offered JTPA training: most did not know it was available.

Existing research also sheds some light on factors affecting the decision to train. Adult education research has investigated why people in general are motivated to participate in adult education, and barriers and resistance to participation. From Houle's classic study of adult learners through a series of studies on participation and non-participation, researchers have built composite pictures of the motivations of adult learners in general.[18] Age and prior educational attainment have been identified as key predictive factors. They may also be important factors for dislocated workers.

A small number of studies have looked particularly at the effect of age on the training decisions of dislocated workers. Bartholomew studied a group of mainly male dislocated workers in California, and found that workers over 45 felt they would be unsuccessful in training classes and that retraining was not a worthwhile investment for them.[19] Merriam studied displaced workers in a JTPA program and found that middle-aged workers (35-49 years) differed both from younger and older ones in their perceptions of learning experiences.[20] More of the middle-aged workers felt they would not be able to do the work, that the program was difficult, and (especially the middle-aged women) that they learned less easily now.

Smith and Price studied the training decisions of a population very similar to ours: displaced women textile workers in rural Georgia.[21] They found that younger women were much more likely to participate in job training. Smith and Price also found that there was more connection between women's work and family life than had been reported in studies of male dislocated workers. The community context may have had a considerable influence on the women's perceptions of employment opportunities after retraining. Women in rural areas often had little choice but to take less desirable jobs, because of what was available to them given their family responsibilities.

> Fundamental questions about employment opportunities for blue collar women in rural communities remain. What are the employment prospects for semi-skilled women who must work, but for whom the changing economic base in Southern rural communities makes finding any jobs in manufacturing difficult? In addition, what training efforts can best assist these women, given constraints of the local labor markets and time and money available for retraining?[22]

The workers in our study had worked in an urban area, but 40 percent of them lived in rural areas. They faced many of the same constraints as the rural women in Georgia.

Outcomes of job training for women in particular are addressed by Maxfield in his synthesis of research on employment and training programs for low-income adults.[23] The population addressed in this research is different in many ways from ours (AFDC recipients or low-income minority female parents), but the findings of the research are suggestive. He concludes that, while programs can be

beneficial for women, "the benefits in terms of increased earnings have tended to be modest, and generally not sufficient to lift low-income families out of poverty." [24] The research suggests that the effectiveness of programs varies greatly, not only with internal program factors, but also with the health of the local economy, and the characteristics of the program participants. On the whole, the women at the bottom (in terms of low education, little work experience) tended to benefit the most from the programs. Women who have substantial work experience may benefit less from training programs.

Do similar patterns hold for training experiences of displaced workers? Leigh surveyed existing evidence about the outcomes of job retraining for displaced workers. He examined quantitative data from four large demonstration projects funded by the federal government in the 1980s, and qualitative data from statewide programs in California and Minnesota. Many of the projects surveyed by Leigh did not serve women, focussing primarily on skilled males. He also reviewed evaluations of CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act) programs, pre-dating JTPA. However, interpretations of the same CETA data by different authors gives wildly varying results, raising questions about its usefulness.

Overall, Leigh found that job search assistance services strongly affect a variety of labor market outcomes, including earnings, placement and employment rates.[25] Evidence on the effectiveness of other program services, however, including training, was not conclusive. He concludes: "There is not clear evidence that either classroom or on-the-job training has a significant net impact on employment or earnings."[26] While in some programs women and workers under the age of 45 seemed to benefit the most from program services, in other sites the prior skill level of the displaced worker was the most important factor in that person's quickly returning to work.

In addition, Leigh found that while training did increase wage levels somewhat *in the short term*, after a six month post-training period, there was no evidence that this trend continued. In some cases, wages actually declined. Likewise, the re-employment process was not significantly accelerated in the long run. Furthermore, Leigh's data addressed only length of unemployment and wages of the job obtained, not other aspects of subsequent employment (that is, what *kinds* of jobs people find). Leigh's study, like others before, does not answer key questions of the impact of training for an older, female displaced workforce.

Taken together, existing studies do suggest a number of hypotheses for our own study. Age and educational level may have an effect on the training decisions and experiences of dislocated workers. Different training activities may have different outcomes. The local job market may also be a significant factor affecting outcomes. For Southern working class women who have been dependent on manufacturing jobs for a generation or more, the changing economic base presents many problems. Is retraining the answer? It is evident that there is much to learn and new insight to be gained from the women workers in our study.

FINDINGS: THE WOMEN AND THE TRAINING PROGRAM

THE WOMEN

We interviewed 100 women, twenty to twenty-two months after the plant had closed. The average age of our sample was 41, sixty percent being in the mid-thirties to mid-fifties age range. They had worked an average of 14 years at the jeans factory, with work experience ranging from a few months to 27 years.

Education levels were consistent with those for the community: 54 percent had graduated high school, while 16 percent had no high school education. Completed grades ranged from fifth to twelfth, with a mean of 10.65 years of education. Of those who had not graduated from high school, nine had obtained their GED before the plant closed, leaving 37 women without either a high school diploma or GED when the plant closed.

Most of the women were deeply shocked at the plant closing. Some were angry, some hurt, some felt numb. **Table 3. Personal Feelings at Time of Plant Closing,** shows the range of emotions present.

TABLE 3. Personal Feelings at Time of Plant Closing	
Anger/disgust	33
Disbelief	33
Shock/numb	33
Relief/a new chance	18
Fear	13
Hurt/sad	12
Devastated/world had ended	5
Hated it for others	5
Surprised	4
Disappointed	3
Other/No answer	9
TOTAL	100%*

* Adds to more than 100 because multiple answers given.

Many of the emotions were mixed, and continued to be so twenty months after the closing. Some, especially the older women, were relieved to have the pressure removed:

> *It was so hard and tiring, and I had been there so long that I just needed out. The best thing that happened for me was they gave me a year on my age and I retired with full benefits. I feel rested and much better now.*

Others felt depressed, felt a loss of their independence and their support network. For some, the feelings were expressed as anger — at The Company for closing its plant, at JTPA, at themselves.

> *I had always had an identity and independence because of the security of my job. Now that had been stripped from me without a decision of my own.*

> *Depression — hit rock bottom because twenty-five years down the drain. I was 54, no retirement, no insurance, nothing.*

> *If it hadn't been for the encouragement from JTPA I honestly believe I would have committed suicide. I live alone and lost interest in doing things I had always done, like square dancing, bowling, going out with friends.*

These feelings were an important factor in all the decisions women made about what to do with their lives after the plant closed. The feelings need to be understood and reckoned with by program staff who deal with displaced workers. And they have to be understood

as an all-embracing context for the findings of this study. As is commonly the case with displaced workers, these women experienced a wide variety of financial, family, personal and emotional problems after the plant closing. Interviewers for our study heard many sad stories of the difficulties women had been facing because of the plant closing.

Thirty-six percent of the women we interviewed told us that they had experienced personal or family problems since the plant closed. These included family arguments from stress in the home, divorce, financial problems and depression. Forty-eight percent said that they would have used professional counseling if it had been available, at low-cost, on an individual and confidential basis.

THE TRAINING PROGRAM

JTPA staff had estimated that about half the employees in the plant took part in at least one component of the JTPA program (job transition classes, GED or literacy classes and job training classes). In our sample 51 percent had enrolled in one or more component of the JTPA program. Twenty-one of the 37 women in our sample who did not have a high school diploma or GED when the plant closed, enrolled in GED/literacy classes. Thirteen of these had passed the GED test at the time of the survey, and 11 had gone on to enroll in job training classes. Eight of these women completed their job training, almost all short courses, while three dropped out.

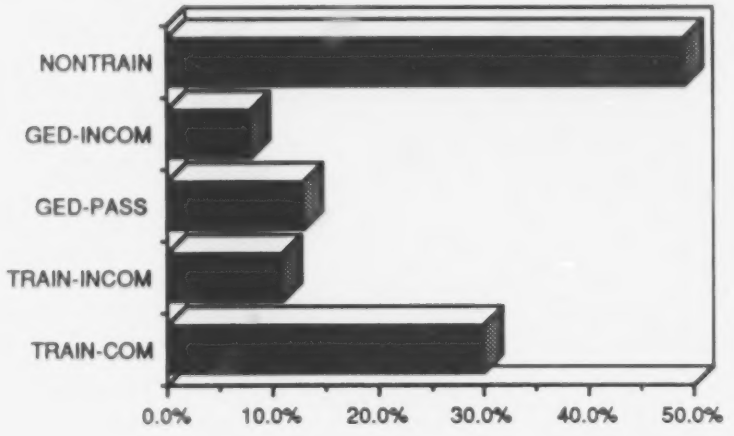
Fifty women enrolled in the job transition classes, a month-long program offered by JTPA to orient the workers to the job market, help them with job searches, resume writing, interviewing and so on.

Including those who first passed their GED, a total of 41 women in our sample had enrolled in JTPA job training classes. These were offered by JTPA sub-contractors: Pellissippi State Technical Community College and two vocational schools — Knoxville's State Area Vocational School and the William Blount Vocational School in Maryville.

Most of the job training programs were short, ten-week classes (three quarters of those who entered job training classes enrolled in a first program of less than three months duration). Almost half of those in this first program (49 percent) enrolled in office skills courses, 37 percent in industrial/business uses of computers, 12 percent enrolled in LPN or CNA classes, and 12 percent in an assortment of other classes. A majority (73 percent) agreed that they had enrolled in classes they wanted, although 24 percent said their classes were not the ones they had wanted.

Not all completed the first program in which they enrolled, although a majority (74 percent) did complete this program. **Figure 1. Program Completion, Job Training and GED** shows completers and non-completers by job training and GED classes.

FIGURE 1. PROGRAM COMPLETION: JOB TRAINING AND GED



Seven of the nine women who did not complete their first job training program were in office skills classes, three in industrial/business uses of computers, and one in LPN classes.[27] One of the workers who had also enrolled in office skills explained that younger women could find jobs with temporary agencies as soon as they could type 60-80 words per minute. Some women may also have dropped out because of the stress and difficulties of being in school after many years in the factory; others because they found office work less appealing than they had at first thought.

Some women enrolled in successive job training programs. Eighteen women enrolled in a second program, of whom 7 did not complete; eleven completed a short-term course (less than three months). Four women went on to a third training program: of these, two dropped out, one completed a short-term course and one was still in training at the time of interview.

The rest of the report on the findings follows our three major research questions: 1) How do women perceive the options available to them when their plant closes, including retraining and education? 2) How do women make choices about participating or not participating in training and education opportunities? and 3) What differences do their participation in training or education make in their

subsequent employment experiences? The section on findings concludes with evaluations of the JTPA program by participants themselves. They comment on their experiences with different aspects of the program, what was helpful and less helpful to them, and their ideas for programmatic changes.

WOMEN'S PERCEPTIONS OF OPTIONS

Women make choices within the bounds of what they think is possible for them. Before we can ask about barriers or deterrents to participation in training and education, we have to understand how women perceive the options open to them, within which choices can be made. For women, ideas about job opportunities are often gender-restricted. For very good reasons, women may see only "women's work" as their options.

In this section we look at how the women in our study perceived the options open to them when the plant closed, and later. We asked about the kinds of jobs they thought they could get both with and without training. We asked how they perceived the value of training for themselves. And we asked how far they felt they understood the options presented to them by JTPA.

Job Options

We asked women how they perceived job options for themselves at the time of the plant closing. We asked what kind of jobs they thought they could get in this area first without, and then with training. As Table 4. Jobs Believed Available Without Training shows, for most women, another job like their last one, in the apparel or other manufacturing industry was the most likely job to get *without* training. A quarter (26 percent) thought they could get apparel jobs and 40 percent other kinds of manufacturing jobs. The only other option perceived by a substantial number of women was work in food services or a restaurant, again mentioned by a quarter.

Those who signed up for GED or job training were somewhat less likely to see apparel jobs as a major option (20 percent of those who

TABLE 4. Jobs Believed Available Without Training

	JOB TRAINING OR GED	NO JOB TRAINING OR GED	TOTAL*
Apparel/Other Mfg	31 (46%)	34 (50%)	65
Service/Food Services/Retail	19 (28%)	18 (26%)	37
Clerical/Office	4 (6%)	3 (4%)	7
Minimum Wage Job	4 (6%)	3 (4%)	7
Nothing Available/Other	9 (13%)	10 (15%)	19
TOTAL	67 (100%)	68 (100%)	135

* Adds to more than 100 due to multiple answers given.

took training or GED classes said apparel was an option, compared with 33 percent of those who did not train or take GED classes.) Perhaps their interpretation of the local job market was one of the factors influencing people's decisions about going for training. If they saw fewer prospects for continuing in the apparel industry they would be more likely to want to train in order to change careers.

At least in the short term, these women were probably realistic in their assessment of jobs open to them in their area without additional training.The actual "jobs in demand" report from the Tennessee Department of Employment Security for 1989 suggests that sewing machine operators, assemblers and food service workers were all available jobs in the area at the time the plant closed.[28] The only major category of available jobs which the women did not mention is low-skilled construction work (being male-dominated, but also unstable and low-paying).

When we asked how they perceived jobs available *with* training (Table 5.), the women split almost evenly between more skilled jobs in manufacturing (30 percent), clerical or office jobs (30 percent), and health service jobs (28 percent.)

Again there were differences between the group which went for training or GED and those that did not. Those who enrolled in training were less likely to mention manufacturing jobs (25 percent) than those who did not enroll in training or GED (35 percent). They were much more likely to mention clerical/office jobs (41 percent, compared with only 19 percent of those who did not train), or health service jobs (33 percent, compared with 23 percent of those who did not train).

Table 5. Jobs Believed Available With Training

	JOB TRAINING OR GED	NO JOB TRAINING OR GED	TOTAL
Apparel	2 (4%)	5 (12%)	7
More Skilled Mfg Job	11 (20%)	12 (29%)	23
Service/Food Services/Retail	19 (35%)	12 (29%)	31
Clerical/Office	21 (39%)	9 (22%)	30
Minimum Wage Job	0	0	0
Nothing	1 (2%)	3 (7%)	4
TOTAL	54 (100%)	41 (100%)	95

Whether by coincidence or not, the training/GED group was much more oriented to the kinds of jobs for which JTPA offered training — clerical and health service jobs. These are, of course, traditional "women's jobs," and both the women themselves and JTPA may have been constrained by gender definitions.

The question of gender underlies much of this research question. We would expect that many of the possibilities women perceive for themselves are influenced by social conventions about the kinds of jobs women can hold. These conventions are constantly being redefined. Secretaries used to be mainly men, for example, until the advent of the typewriter. Factory workers used to be mainly men, and the more highly-paid ones still are. In apparel plants, for example, the cutting room jobs, which are higher paid, are often men's jobs, while women operate the sewing machines.

Ten years ago, programs to retrain women for "non-traditional jobs" were popular. Such programs put women into coal mining, welding and metalworking, skilled construction trades and other jobs which had been exclusively male. In recent years, women have entered many traditionally male preserves, and the definitions of what women can do are slowly changing. This suggests that the bounds of possibilities seen by displaced workers can be expanded with the help of good social programs.

Such programs would start where women are, and help them expand their thinking as well as their options. This expansion did not happen with this particular group of women. Training options were limited to traditional definitions of "women's work" — nursing, office work — or to continue in manufacturing. Only a few set out to buck the tide, and they had to make it on their own.

Job training could be seen as enabling people to gain the skills they will need for jobs of the future, not just what is available today. But the training programs offered to these women does not seem to fit well with projected growth occupations for their area. **Table 6. Top Ten Projected Growth Occupations, Knox and Blount Counties,** for 1985-1995, shows a mixture of more and less skilled jobs, and a mix of service and production jobs. The largest number of new jobs projected is for registered nurses, followed by production workers (assemblers and fabricators), guards, accountants/auditors, and hair stylists/cosmetologists. The women in our study were not offered training for most of these occupations.

TABLE 6. Top Ten Projected Growth Occupations, Knox and Blount Co.

	1988	1998	TOTAL GROWTH	PERCENT GROWTH
Reg. Nurses	2,585	3,705	1,120	43.3%
Assemblers/fabr.	1,865	2,710	845	45.3
Guards	1,635	2,255	620	37.9%
Accountants	1,485	1,935	450	30.3
Hair/cosmetol.	560	920	360	64.2%
Elec. Technicians	585	910	325	55.5
Elec. Engineers	435	700	265	60.9%
Lawyers	430	645	215	50.0%
Computer prog.	500	715	215	43.0%
Mech. Engineers	370	545	175	47.2%

Source: TN Dept. of Employment Security, Tennessee Employment Projections, 1985 and 1995: East Tennessee Substate Areas, Table 18 p.90.

Perceived Value of Training

We next asked women what kinds of jobs they thought at the time of the interview they could get, either with or without training. Many had not changed their perceptions, but some of those who had expected when the plant first closed that training would open more options for them had become disillusioned.

In response to this open-ended question, 14 percent of the training group said they now feel "there are no jobs: training doesn't help," and 12 percent said that "you need more/better training" or "on-the-job training" in order to get a job. Their experience with training and then trying to find a job had affected their assumptions about the value of training.

Few of those who did not train were as pessimistic about the value of training. Indeed, 23 percent of those who did *not* train or take GED now felt: "you have to have training for any job," compared with only 16 percent of those who did train or GED. They blamed themselves and their lack of training for difficulties in getting a job, rather than the job market itself. Those who had trained and still had problems finding a good job were less likely to take personal blame. They were more likely to point to the local job market, or to perceived inadequacies of the job training programs, than to blame their own lack of skills.

We asked several attitude questions to probe women's feelings about the value of training in getting a job. We asked how much they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements, using a 5 part Likert-type scale (disagree strongly, disagree, don't know, agree, agree strongly). A mixture of positive and negative statements were included in the list.

On the whole, the women in our study strongly valued training, both for its own sake and as a way of getting a better job. One statement read, "I didn't think that taking classes would help me get a job." A majority disagreed or disagreed strongly (total of 70 percent) with the statement, implying that they thought that training would be valuable in getting a job. However, we should note that 22 percent agreed that taking classes would *not* help them get a job.

Women who had entered training or GED classes were somewhat more positive about the value of training in getting a job: 76 percent disagreed or disagreed strongly with the statement (compared with 65 percent of the non-training group). However, even in the training group, 18 percent agreed that training would not help them get a job (and 25 percent of the non-training group were pessimistic about the value of training).

There are strands of cynicism in the attitudes of most of these women. When read the statement, "It's not what you know but who you know that helps you get a job" a majority agreed (54 percent) or strongly agreed (17 percent). There are no significant differences between those who trained and those who did not. In part, their reaction to this statement is borne out by the ways in which those who had obtained new jobs had found out about them (see p. 55).

Most found their jobs through personal contacts, family or friends. "Who you know" was obviously very important for all of them in getting a job.

Understanding JTPA

The JTPA program did present the women with some options they might not otherwise have had. However, our study suggests that these options were often not fully understood. A majority of the women we interviewed did not feel that they understood all of the options offered by JTPA (63 percent). Of those who did not understand the options, 63 percent (almost two-thirds) indicated they thought the problem was the JTPA program — they were given different answers at different times, pushed too fast, were not given clear and thorough explanations about their options, and so on.

> *There was a lot of pamphlets at work but we couldn't get any answers on what would be paid or not, only if we didn't get signed up for school there would be no more money. I was also told once you sign up for something you could not change and go into a different field... We were rushed into signing up for classes because we were told that they didn't know how much money was available and if we didn't get started we may not have funds for what was left.*

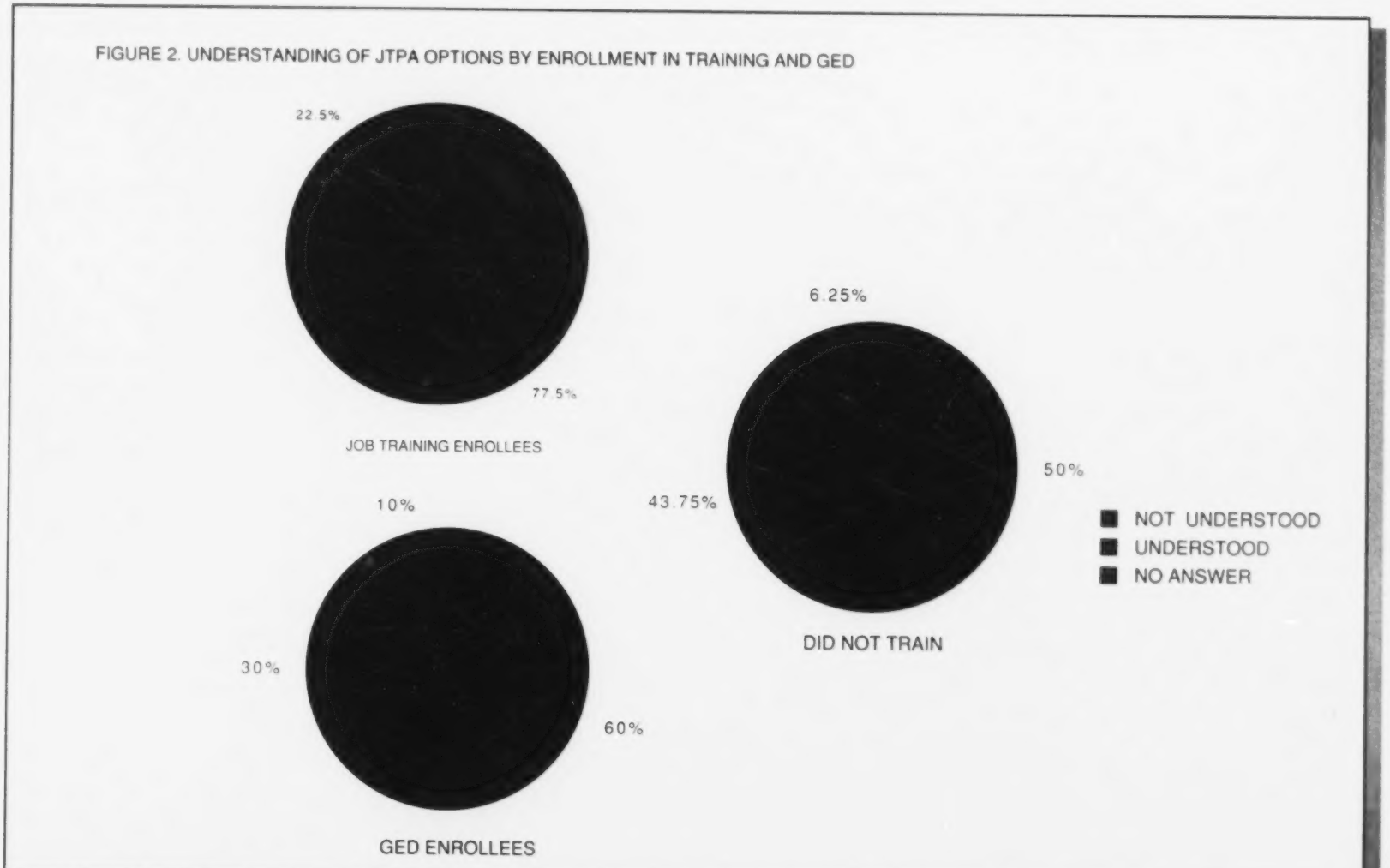
Twenty-five percent of the women who did not understand the JTPA options blamed themselves and their current psychological state — they were too much in shock, too upset, too scared of the future, just not interested. A third group of women (21 percent) blamed the confusion of the moment — too much was going on.

> *Too much was going on at one time. New information, you don't absorb it all. JTPA was very supportive to me - but there's just so much you can't absorb. Just wasn't getting through to you.*

Curiously, those who did in fact sign up for training or GED were more likely to say they had *not* understood the options than those who did not train. As Figure 2. shows, 76 percent (38 women) of those who trained said they did not understood the options, compared with 53 percent of those who did not train.

There is a weak negative correlation between those who trained and those who understood the options (see Correlations table in Appendix). Those who did not understand the options were also very likely

FIGURE 2. UNDERSTANDING OF JTPA OPTIONS BY ENROLLMENT IN TRAINING AND GED



to say that they did not feel they had enough time to make decisions, and the correlation between these two is so strong that they seem aspects of the same feeling.

Among those who trained, those who did *not* understand the options were more likely to have signed up for longer classes than those that said they did understand the options. One quarter of those who trained and said they understood the options were non-completers, while non-completers comprised only 15 percent of those who trained and did *not* understand options.

Our advisors suggest that those who did not train were more likely to say they had understood the JTPA options because they had not pursued them very far. Those who wanted to train soon encountered problems with the information being presented to them by different JTPA staff. Their inadequate preparation for training may have contributed to some of them dropping out early, or taking only short-term courses.

> *I know now that JTPA would have paid for (longer) classes at State Area Vocational School, but if I had had the counseling in the beginning I would not have taken the short classes at Pellissippi State and William Blount.*

This finding suggests the importance of good individual counseling early on in the process. We found many women who said they had not taken training because they had not fully understood the options. Greater clarity on the options available, long-term and short-term, would probably have enabled more women to take advantage of the programs offered.

MAKING CHOICES: BARRIERS TO TRAINING

Within the bounds of what is perceived, women make choices. Many of these choices are constrained by a variety of factors, including economic, demographic and attitudinal barriers.

One of the most significant barriers to going back to school, especially for women, was removed by the plant closing. Time had prevented a number of women from going back and getting their GED, or getting training for another job. Half of those who enrolled in GED classes when the plant closed said they had considered doing so before, but had not done so because of work and family responsibilities. Now they had time.

However, a number of barriers, both situational and psychological, still existed for many women. These barriers prevented them from choosing the "option" of job training.

Socio-economic constraints

Socio-economic constraints help set the bounds of real possibilities for women at a particular time in their lives. Not working at all may be an option for some women, but not many these days. Taking time off from paid work to train may be an option for some, but not for others who have families to support and need the income. Relocat-

ing to another area with better job prospects may be an option for some, but not for others with employed husbands, and extended families depending on their care.

Among the barriers to enrolling in training, the need to keep a steady income coming in to the family was paramount. The women were told at the time of the closing in September, 1988, that they would have The Company's "notification pay" for three months, followed by the usual 26 weeks unemployment pay, to end in June, 1989. Beyond that nine month period, they were told, there would be no money to continue schooling. In the end, Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) funds were found to continue a number of people in school past June of 1989; indeed, some people were still in training with TRA funding at the time of our survey, 20 months after the plant closing. But some people who initially wanted to take longer-term training did not do so because they believed they would not have ongoing financial support.

> *I really would have liked to taken the course for LPN, but my unemployment would have run out in June 1989, and the course was for one year, starting in April of 1989. After June, I did not have any money to support myself. If I had known about TRA money being available I could have taken this course instead of looking for another job.*

A quarter (15 women) of those who did not take job training or GED classes said they had not done so because they needed a job immediately. Some may have been single parents (33 percent were not married, compared with 19 percent of the total sample), providing the sole household income. Some had a disabled or sick husband. Some had come to rely on their second paycheck.

> *Even though my husband makes good money I always counted on my paycheck. I had car payments to make and three credit cards to pay off. I worked in order to give my daughter the nice things that kids want. Her life was lost in September in a car accident.*

> *I wanted to get into the medical field, to have something stable. I signed up for LPN classes but didn't go because I need a job, and didn't know how long it would be funded or I could draw unemployment... I guess I would be better off now [if had taken nursing training], but then I didn't think I could afford to go, because I didn't understand I could.*

> *We had just bought our home, signed the papers the week before the plant closed. I was torn apart, I didn't know how we would make the payments. But my sister helped me get this job and I went right to work. It's hard, and I hate to drive to Knoxville every day, but I have to.*

> *Financial problems — you have to make ends meet.*

The need to take another job immediately was not only a barrier to beginning job training, it also contributed to the drop-out rate. Almost half of those who started classes but did not complete them said they dropped out to take a job. Another eight women said they would have liked to take additional training after their first short training session, but were unable to do so because they needed a job. In all, twenty-nine women of the hundred in our study, cited job pressures as affecting their training decisions.

Health insurance was as important a constraint on decisions as wages for many women. Sixteen percent of the women in our study did not have any health insurance at the time of interview, and many of those who said they did not train because they needed a job cited health insurance as a major reason.

> *I had to go back to work to get insurance. My husband's medicine is very high-priced.*

Health insurance continues to be a major concern of those who still do not have coverage, and they and others cited health concerns as one of the causes of stress and personal problems they had experienced since the plant closing .

There were also other barriers to entering training for some women. Some said they were not aware of the options, or not sure how to choose between them (19 percent). A few did not take training because the classes they wanted were not offered, or were full (8 percent).

Almost a third cited some situational barrier to entering training, including not having a GED (8 percent), health problems (5 percent), childcare problems (3 percent), family problems (7 percent) and being on workers compensation and being advised by their lawyer not to take training (7 percent). Childcare support could have been provided by the JTPA program, but in our survey no program participants received childcare support.

Some of these barriers could have been addressed by the program: counseling could have helped those who were unsure of the options and unsure how to choose; childcare problems could have been resolved by the provision of support services. The GED issue could also have been addressed by programmatic changes, integrating the remedial basic skills program with job skill training (see p.40).

Most of all, the need to keep a steady income coming in, and maybe even more importantly, to keep up health insurance, could be addressed by worker retraining program policy. Just as now the Welfare Reform Act is looking for long-term transition assistance for people moving off welfare onto the job market, so public policy could address longer-term transition for workers being retrained for other jobs. Income support and healthcare coverage would be important components of such a program to enable more workers to retrain for new careers.

Demographic factors

Based on other studies of reasons for non-participation in adult education programs, we had expected that demographic factors (including age, family responsibilities and previous educational attainment), would have been factors affecting these women's participation in the JTPA program. We found that these factors were not as important as we had expected.

Age was only a slight deterrent to engaging in job training. The average age of the group which enrolled in training or GED was 40.25 years, while the average age of those who did not was 41.70. As **Table 7. Age and Job Training** shows, more of the middle age group (34-43) participated in training, and fewer of the oldest age group (54+), but the differences were not great, and there is no statistically significant correlation between age and enrollment in training or GED programs.

TABLE 7. Age and Job Training/GED

AGE	JOB TRAINING	GED	DID NOT TRAIN	TOTAL*
< 25	2 (5%)	0	3 (6%)	5 (5%)
25-33	7 (17%)	3 (14%)	10 (20%)	20 (18%)
34-43	18 (44%)	10 (48%)	15 (31%)	43 (39%)
44-53	9 (22%)	6 (29%)	11 (22%)	26 (23%)
54>	5 (12%)	2 (10%)	10 (20%)	17 (15%)
TOTAL	41 (100%)	21 (100%)	49 (100%)	111

* Adds to more than 100 because 11 women took both GED classes and Job Training.

Age was apparently a factor in completion of training programs, however. **Table 8. Program Completion by Age**, shows that more of the middle age group of women completed their job training course than the younger age groups. Age correlates significantly with program completion: the older women were more likely to complete their first training program.

TABLE 8. Program Completion by Age: Job Training and GED

	JOB TRAINING		GED	
AGE	COMPLETE	NONCOMPLETE	PASSED TEST	DID NOT PASS TEST
- 25	1 (3%)	1 (11%)	0	0
25 - 33	3 (10%)	4 (44%)	2 (15%)	0
34 - 43	17 (57%)	1 (11%)	6 (46%)	0
44 - 53	4 (13%)	3 (33%)	4 (31%)	0
54 +	5 (17%)	0	1 (8%)	1
TOTAL	30 (100%)	9 (100%)	13 (100%)	100%

We can speculate as to the reasons for more younger women dropping out of the training programs. Younger women may find it easier to get jobs and so feel less need of training to support their job search. However, we found no statistically significant correlations for age with value of education. Younger women may well have

had more family responsibilities, including dependent children and outstanding debts, so may have had more need of an immediate job, either for income maintenance or for health insurance.

We had expected that family responsibilities would be a factor in training decisions, including marital status, dependent children, or sole income producer. These may have been factors for some women, but they are not statistically significant for the study as a whole. This may be partly because most of the women in our study were middle-aged or older, with children who were probably grown. Those who had younger children must already have made childcare arrangements for them. Only three women said they could have used JTPA assistance for childcare. Nevertheless, for a younger group of women, childcare would likely have been a much more significant barrier to training.

We did find that total household income before the closing was a factor in choices about job training. Those who had the lowest household incomes were less likely to participate in job training (but not GED) classes than those who had the highest household incomes. Those who did not have another income coming into the home, or only a small additional income, most likely needed to work immediately. They could not afford to live long on unemployment compensation.

We had expected to find prior educational attainment a factor in decisions about entering training. It has been found to be important in earlier research on participation in adult education. But these women do not fit the conventional view that low prior educational achievement often discourages enrollment in adult education. Two-thirds of those who lacked a high school diploma enrolled in GED classes when the plant closed. This compares favorably with the 47 percent of high school graduates who enrolled in classes.

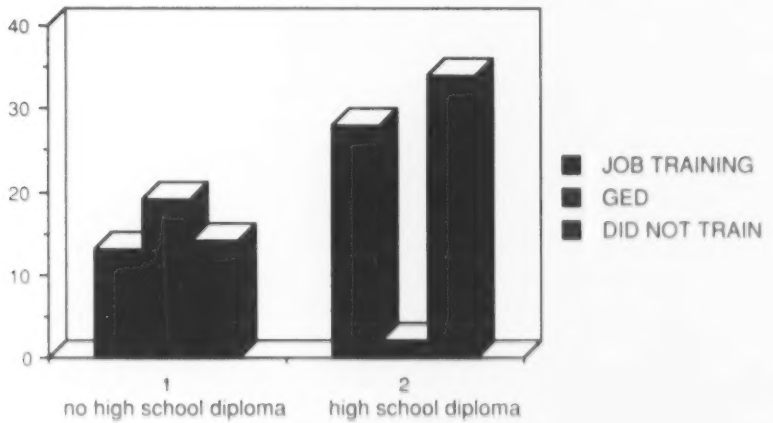
Nevertheless, education was an important factor for some women. Some were discouraged because they felt they did not have enough basic education to take advantage of job training:

> *I really didn't think with a seventh grade education I was equipped to go and do well.*

> *A lot of the problem was me. I didn't think I had enough education to take some of the classes. I thought I might be embarrassed.*

Low prior educational achievement was also a negative factor in enrollment in job training (as opposed to GED). JTPA required those who did not have a high school diploma or GED when the plant closed to pass the GED test before they could enroll in job training. **Figure 3. Prior Educational Attainment by Training Status** shows that only 28 percent of those who lacked a high school diploma or GED when the plant closed enrolled in job training classes, much lower than the 44 percent of high school graduates who enrolled in job training.

FIGURE 3. PRIOR EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY TRAINING STATUS



The JTPA policy made the GED a hurdle which not all made it over before the funds for job training ran out. Other approaches to basic skills remediation and job training are possible, which integrate the two in a combined and intensive program. The Rockefeller Foundation's Minority Female Single Parent Demonstration has shown how successful this approach can be.[29] It has potential as part of a successful retraining program for displaced workers when the population has significant numbers of non-high school graduates.

Attitudes

Certain attitudes seem to have been more important than demographic factors in affecting decisions about training. In particular, perception of age seems to have been significant (much more so than actual age). Those who felt themselves "too old to go to school" were less likely to participate in all three kinds of classes offered by JTPA: the transition classes, GED and job training classes.

When asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement "I was too old to go to school," 15 (31 percent) of those who did not train agreed, while only 6 (12 percent) of those who did train agreed. Perception of being too old for training correlates significantly and negatively with actually taking training or GED. There is no significant correlation between actual age and participation in training.

Other attitudes also appear to have affected the decision to enter training: feeling they had friends that went for training; being scared of going for training; feeling that "it's not what you know but who you know that helps you get a job;" and memories of earlier public schooling.

Agreeing with the statement, "I didn't take classes because none of my friends from the plant were taking the classes," correlates strongly and negatively with the decision to train or enroll in GED classes, and particularly with job training. Those who agreed that they did not think their friends were taking classes were less likely to enroll in training themselves.

Agreeing with the statement, "The idea of going for training scared me," correlates strongly with the decision to train or enroll in GED

classes, and particularly with the GED. Curiously, those who admitted the idea of training scared them were more likely to enroll in job training. Perhaps those who took the idea of training seriously admitted to being scared, while those who did not consider training for other reasons, were not scared.

Agreeing with the statement, "It's not what you know but who you know that helps you get a job," which might be interpreted as a negative value on training, correlates with the decision to take the GED, although not with job training. Those who agreed with the statement were more likely to take the GED classes. It does not correlate significantly with enrollment in job training.

Adult educators often expect that bad memories of public schooling will discourage adults' later participation in educational programs. That is not the case for this group. There is no correlation between memory of school and enrolling in job training, but there is a correlation with enrolling in GED classes. Those who had bad memories of public school, and felt they did not do well when they were there as students, were less likely to have stayed in school through twelfth grade, and were *more* likely now to sign up for the GED. The statement: "I didn't do well in public school when I was there," correlated positively with enrolling in GED classes. A later question, "Do you have good memories of being in public school?" correlates negatively with enrolling in either training or GED classes. Both indicate that those who had bad earlier educational experiences were more likely to have dropped out of high school before graduating, and were thus prime candidates for GED enrollment now.

The value women placed on training may also be an attitudinal factor in the decision whether or not to train. However, we do not know from our study at one point of time whether those who had decided not to train were using the low value of training as a justification for their decision, or whether it was a causal factor. The women who did not train on the whole valued training less than those who did train. Forty percent of those who said they did not train because they needed a job, felt that training would take too long. Forty-seven percent felt that training would not help them get a job. Some women said they were just not interested in job training (22 percent of those who did not train or take GED).

Family ties and commitments may be another barrier which women face in entering new careers. While 60 percent of the women we interviewed said they were willing to commute to a nearby town to get a new job, only 16 percent were willing to relocate in order to get a new job. The main reasons given for being unwilling to move were family ties, a husband's job, and a feeling of being rooted in the community ("this is home"). This inability to move to get a new job may have narrowed down the options from which women could choose, including training options.

In conclusion, the primary barrier to training was economic: the need to get another job immediately. The low level of income support from unemployment pay after The Company's notification pay ran out, the short period of time covered (a total of nine months), and the need to continue health insurance were major factors in the decisions of a number of women not to enroll in training. Demographic factors other than income were less significant than we had expected for this group of women. Some attitudinal factors seem to have been important, although somewhat hard to interpret.

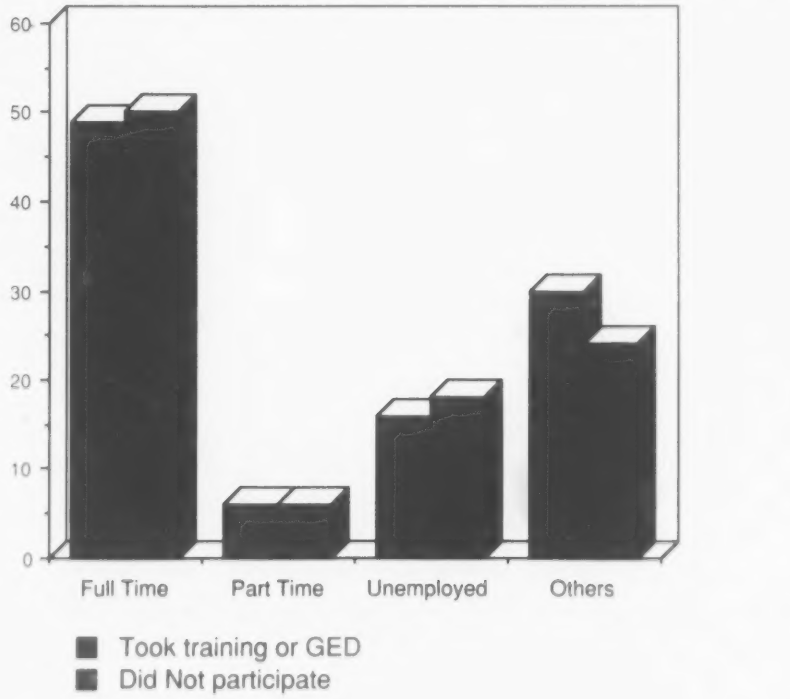
TRAINING AND JOBS

Our third research question asks what difference participation in job training or GED programs made in the women's subsequent employment experiences. We looked at their employment status at time of interview, the kinds of jobs they obtained, how their hourly wage and benefits compared with their last position with The Company, job satisfaction, and whether they thought their training had helped them with their new job. Most of this section is based on the 76 women who had held a first job since the plant closed.

Impact on jobs

At the time of the survey, some twenty months after the closing, there was no significant difference in employment status between those who did and did not participate in the JTPA program. As Figure 4. Employment Status at Time of Interview shows, about half of those who did not train, like those who did train, had a full-time job. Six percent of both groups had a part-time job and 16-19 percent were unemployed. Others were still in school (either in JTPA or another program), retired or disabled.

Figure 4. Participation in Training Program and Employment Status



There are some differences between those who enrolled in job training and those who enrolled in GED classes. **Table 9. Employment Status at Time of Interview** shows that those who had enrolled in GED classes were somewhat less likely to be full-time employed at the time of interview, partly because more were still in school, and partly because more were unemployed. The differences are not statistically significant.

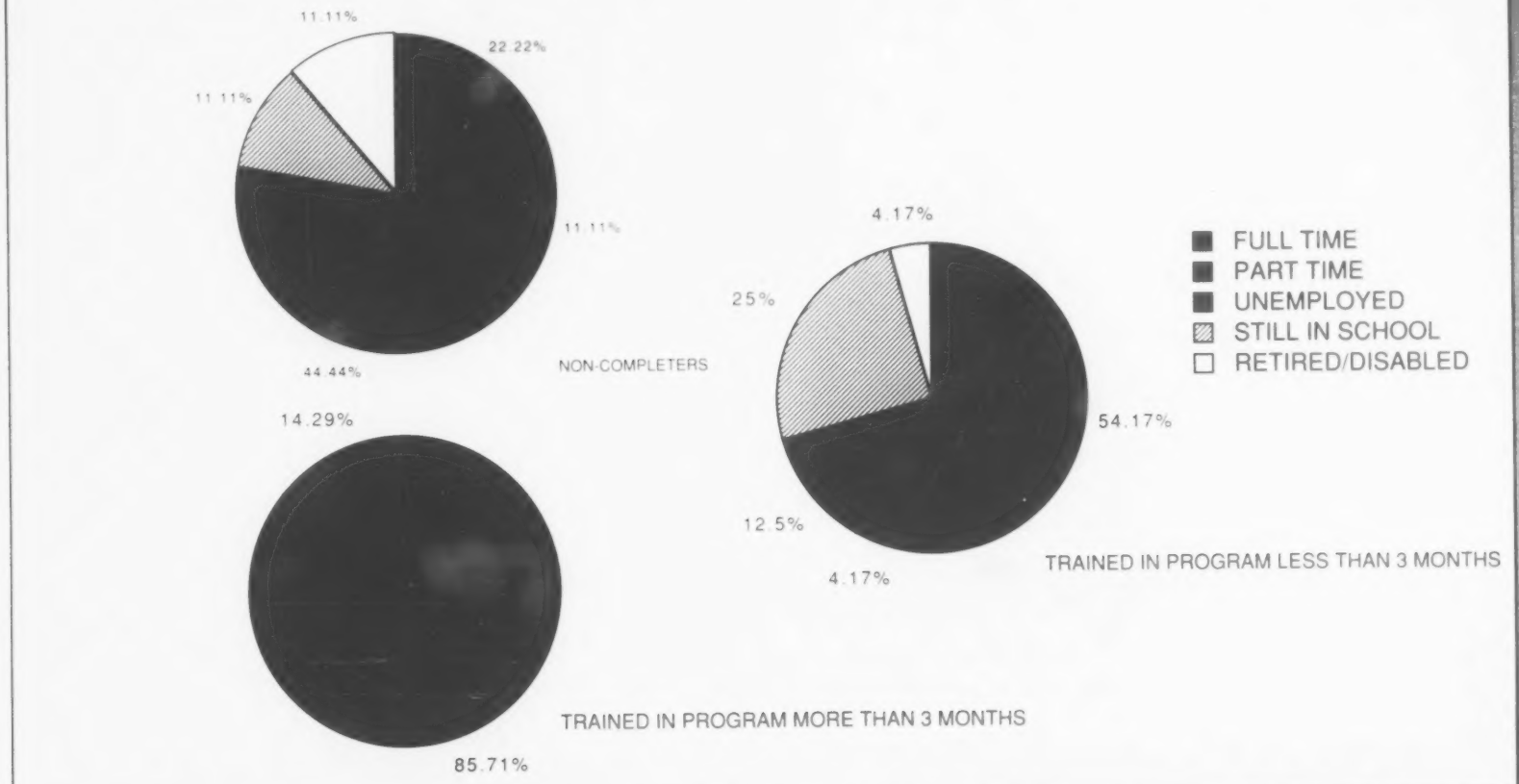
Length of training in the first training program appears to have made some difference in employment status. **As Figure 5. Employment Status of those who took Job Training** shows, the longer women stayed in training, the more likely they were to have full-time jobs at the time of interview. Those who had dropped out of training were much more likely to be unemployed at the time of interview than any of the others, even though many of them said they dropped out because they needed a job immediately.

TABLE 9. Employment Status at Time of Interview, Job Training and GED

EMPLOYMENT	JOB TRAINING	GED	DID NOT TRAIN	TOTAL*
Full-Time Job	21 (51%)	8 (38%)	24 (50%)	53
Part-Time Job	3 (7%)	2 (10%)	3 (6%)	8
Unemployed	6 (15%)	4 (19%)	9 (19%)	19
Still in School	9 (22%)	6 (29%)	2 (4%)	17
Retired	1 (2%)	0	5 (10%)	6
Disabled	1 (2%)	1 (5%)	5 (10%)	7
TOTAL	41 (100%)	21 (100%)	48 (100%)	110

* Adds to more than 100 respondents because 11 women took both job training and GED classes.

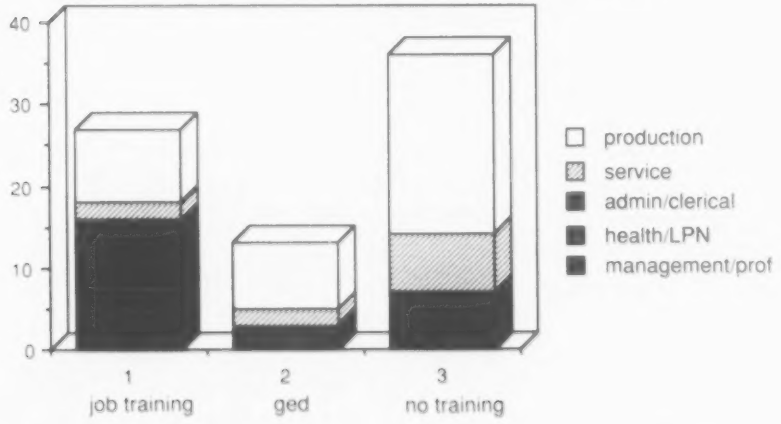
FIGURE 4. EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THOSE WHO TOOK JOB TRAINING



Types of jobs

Job training made some difference to the pattern of new employment. Those who trained had a greater diversity of jobs than those who did not train. As **Figure 6. Training and First Job Occupation** shows, among the women who had obtained jobs since the closing, more of those who took part in job training programs were able to move from production jobs into other occupations than was the case for those who did not train. However, a third of the women who took job training remained in production jobs.

FIGURE 6. TRAINING AND FIRST JOB OCCUPATION



It appears that GED classes on their own made little difference to employment patterns, although some took part in subsequent job training. Most women who enrolled in GED classes, like those who did not train at all, remained in production jobs. Because they were required to take their GED before they could enroll in job training, those who needed their GED either did not get job training at all, or took only short-term courses (less than three months). This probably affected their ability to make a career shift.

Women who enrolled in job training were also more likely to find jobs outside of manufacturing industry than either the GED enrollees or those who did not participate in the JTPA program at all. As **Table 10. Training and First Job by Industry** shows, those who had enrolled in job training did make more of a shift into the service and trade sectors than their co-workers who did not take job training.

While there was a connection between the type of training enrolled in and the type of first job found, it was not exact. Of the eight women who completed an industrial/business computer course, half got production jobs and half office or managerial jobs. Of the thirteen women who had enrolled in an office skills program, eleven

TABLE 10. Training and First Job by Industry

INDUSTRY	JOB TRAINING	GED	DID NOT TRAIN	TOTAL
Manufacturing	10 (37%)	9 (69%)	22 (61%)	41 (55%)
Transp/Commun	1 (4%)	0	1 (3%)	2 (3%)
Trade	4 (15%)	0	2 (6%)	6 (8%)
Services	11 (41%)	4 (31%)	9 (25%)	24 (32%)
Construction	1 (4%)	0	1 (3%)	2 (3%)
TOTAL	27 (100%)	13 (100%)	35 (100%)	75

had a full-time and one a part-time job by the time of interview. Seven of them (54 percent) were working in office jobs (technical, sales and administrative support) and another two had a managerial job. Three women (23 percent) took production jobs, despite their office training. One was unemployed. The course in which training most closely matched jobs was LPN, where three out of four did have nursing jobs at time of interview (the fourth person took a service job.)

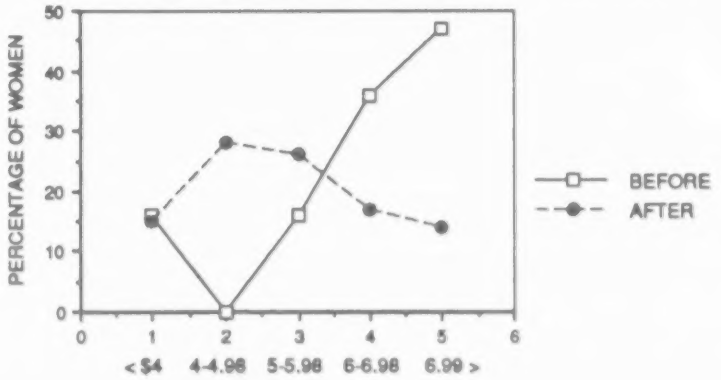
Some of those who took only short-term job training courses may have found that the courses did not help them get a job outside manufacturing. In particular, those who took clerical training found themselves in a local job market competing with experienced secretaries laid off in the Tennessee Valley Authority's Reduction In Force, and other layoffs. Some may have found clerical work less attractive than they had at first thought — with lower wages than manufacturing, few benefits, no overtime available, and most jobs requiring commuting to Knoxville.

It is less easy to explain how seven of the 36 women who did not train also got office jobs.

Wages

Our study confirmed what earlier plant closings studies have found: displaced workers commonly lose wages. A large majority of the women in our study lost wages when we compared their last wage before the plant closing to the wages of their first job after the closing. Average wages dropped by 24 percent from $7.08/hr to $5.36/hr. As Figure 7. Wage Levels Before and After Job Loss shows, close to half of the sample had made $7.00 per hour or more in their last job with The Company. However, in their first job after the closing, 14 percent made less than $4.00 per hour (close to minimum wage levels), and 42 percent made less than $5.00 per hour.

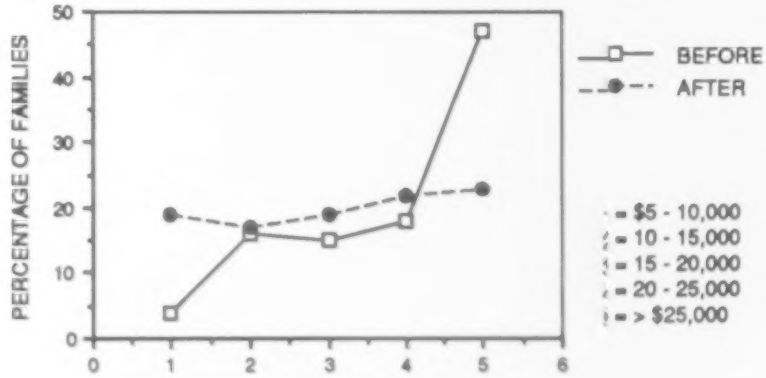
FIGURE 7. WAGE LEVELS BEFORE AND AFTER JOB LOSS



Fifty-one percent of those who had held a job since the plant closing, experienced wage losses of 25 percent or more. A quarter experienced wage losses of 60 percent or more.

These wage losses also had a substantial impact on total family income. As Figure 8. Family Income Levels Before and After Job Loss shows, almost half the women interviewed had total family incomes before the closing of $25,000 or more. After the closing, less than a quarter had family incomes that high.

FIGURE 8. FAMILY INCOME LEVELS BEFORE AND AFTER JOB LOSS



Job training does not appear to have made a significant difference to wage loss. Table 11. Training Status by Change in Personal Wage shows that almost three-quarters of those who took job training courses experienced a wage loss. However, those who enrolled in GED classes, most of whom went into manufacturing jobs, were less likely to experience a wage loss, and more likely to be able to maintain their wage level. One third of the GED group maintained the same wages, and only 58 percent lost wages.

TABLE 11. Traning Status by Change in Personal Wage

CHANGE IN WAGES	JOB TRAINING	GED	DID NOT TRAIN	TOTAL
Increase	2 (7%)	1 (8%)	3 (8%)	6 (8%)
Same	5 (19%)	4 (31%)	2 (6%)	11 (15%)
Decrease: < 25%	10 (37%)	3 (23%)	7 (19%)	20 (26%)
26 - 59%	5 (19%)	0	12 (33%)	17 (22%)
60% >	5 (19%)	4 (31%)	11 (31%)	20 (26%)
Insufficient data	0	1 (8%)	1 (3%)	2 (3%)
TOTAL	27 (100%)	13 (100%)	36 (100%)	76 (100%)

Although not statistically significant, it does appear that on the whole those who enrolled in job training, and especially the GED, experienced less of a wage loss than those who did not train. Two-thirds of those who did not train at all experienced wage losses of 25 percent or more. However only one third of those who enrolled in GED, and 38 percent of those who enrolled in job training, experienced wage losses of that magnitude.

As one would expect, the type of occupation and industry made a significant difference to the wage of the first job after the plant closed. To some extent these negated the impact of training. Most of those who did not train, or who enrolled in GED classes, stayed in manufacturing jobs, and they experienced a wide range of new wage levels. Eight of the ten women who made over $7.00 an hour in Job

1 were in manufacturing jobs. This finding, however, is skewed by the eleven women (out of the 38 total in manufacturing jobs) who moved to another of The Company's plants in the area, and who were able to maintain wages and benefits at a higher level than those who went into other manufacturing jobs.

Of the 35 women whose first job after the closing was another production job, 11 percent made wage gains, and 14 percent maintained the same wage level as before. Altogether, three quarters of the production workers lost wages, and almost half (47 percent) experienced wage losses of 60 percent or more.

Those who went into the low-skill service jobs fared even worse. All lost wages, and more than two-thirds experienced wage losses of 60 percent or more. In contrast, the two women who had obtained jobs as LPNs by the time of interview both made substantial wage gains.

None of those who went into technical, sales or clerical jobs made wage gains, although 17 percent were able to maintain their previous wage level. However, the wage losses in this sector were not as deep as for many production workers: 22 percent lost up to a quarter of their previous wage level, and 44 percent lost between a quarter and a half.

Thirty-seven percent of those who had trained went into office jobs, almost all of which paid in the $4.00-6.99 per hour range. All but one of the women who went into office jobs earned less than their average wage before the plant closed. Despite their substantial investment of time and energy in job training to make a transition out of the factory, they earned about what other sewing jobs in the area paid.

While we look primarily at the first job after the plant closing, we should note that those who had taken subsequent jobs by the time of interview did not appear to have increased their wages significantly. The average wage of the first job was $5.35, of the second job was $5.81, and of the third job was $5.55.

Benefits

Their jobs with The Company had carried good benefits: employer-paid health insurance covering dependents, union representation. Most new jobs did not have these benefits. Seventy-two percent of those who did not train, 79 percent of those who did train and 62 percent of those who took the GED ended up in non-union jobs. Fifty percent of those who took job training, 38 percent of those who took the GED, and 50 percent of those who did neither, got jobs *without* employer-paid health insurance.

Most office jobs lacked health benefits (72 percent of women who took office jobs lacked employer-paid health insurance). All the women who had office jobs lacked union representation.

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a complex issue. We looked at *changes* in job satisfaction, by asking whether the women liked their new job more than, less than, or about the same as their last job before the closing.

Overall, more people expressed dissatisfaction than satisfaction with their new job. Of the total sample, just over half (54 percent) liked their first new job less than their old one; 15 percent liked it the same and 32 percent liked it more.

Those who had moved on to a second job since the plant closing tended to like it rather better than their job before the closing. Sixty percent of the twenty women who had a second job since the closing liked it better than the old, 25 percent liked it less, and 10 percent liked it about the same.

There are some significant differences in terms of how much people liked their new job in comparison to the old one. Almost all of those who went into other sewing jobs (excluding those who worked for the same company in a different plant) disliked their new job: 90 percent liked it *less* than their old job.

Training, or perhaps moving into another type of job, seems to have improved job satisfaction for many. **Figure 9. Satisfaction with First Job** shows that only a third of those who trained or took GED classes liked their new job *less* than their old one; and half liked their new job *more*. Twice as many (69 percent) of those who did not train liked their new job *less* than the old. The difference between job satisfaction of those who trained and those who did not train is significant.[30]

Not all those who made the transition from factory work to office work found it easy. One woman told us:

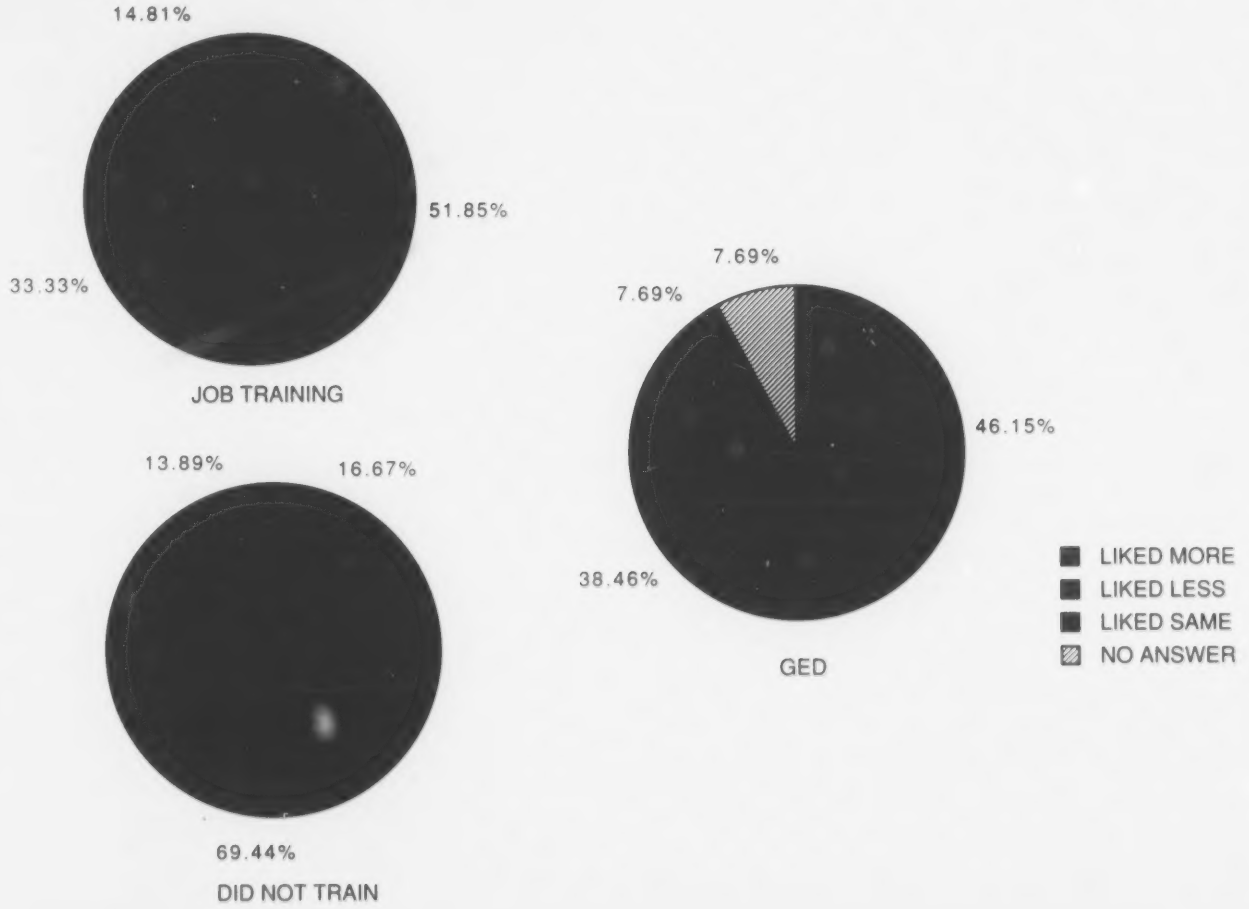
> *I get tired of dressing up. These office jobs aren't what you really think they are. I do work for real good people, but you have to do so many different things at the same time. Like I'll just start typing and the phone will ring. I guess we were just geared to factory work.*

The transition can affect women's feelings of worth. In the sewing factory, a worker can see what she has done and measure it each day. In an office job, it is often hard to see what you have done and measure the value of your work.

Contribution of training to new job

The overall value of training to these women's new jobs is unclear. We wondered if they saw direct application of their training to getting or doing their new jobs. We asked the women who had trained, and who had a job since the closing, whether they felt their training had been helpful to them in their new job. Twenty-six women responded: 54 percent of them said their training had not helped them with their new job.

FIGURE 9. SATISFACTION WITH FIRST JOB



Overall, the findings of our study suggest that training did make some differences to the employment experiences of the women we interviewed. Job training in particular opened up a wider array of job options. Enrolling in GED classes did not make a difference to job options, but does seem to have made a difference in wage loss. Enrolling in either the GED or job training does seem to lead to somewhat higher levels of job satisfaction. Nevertheless, substantial numbers of all women liked their new job less than their old.

PARTICIPANTS' EVALUATIONS OF JTPA PROGRAMS

Most women who had enrolled in job training or GED classes felt that the training program had been helpful to them personally. For some it was a way to keep busy, and keep connected with other people in a time of crisis in their lives. For others it helped build their self-confidence, or gave them specific skills they needed.

> *School was one way of staying in touch with one another.*

> *I wanted to find another job and it helped to build my confidence. . . I learned how to better handle myself and that I could also ask questions.*

> [Job transition classes were helpful because] *they gave lots of points in how to get a job. They encouraged us to go on to school.*

> [The LPN training] *Made me realize I had potential. . . I feel it was a wonderful opportunity to express myself as an individual. Feel it is a spiritual calling as well as a good trade.*

Sixty-nine percent of those who had gone through the JTPA program said they would do it again. The women who were positive about the training program, and said they would do it again, had three main reasons: training is necessary to get a good job; they liked being in school and learning; and they loved their new job or career and could not have entered it without training.

Twenty-five percent of the women who went through the JTPA program said they would not do so again. Those who were negative about the training program were mainly disillusioned about the value of the training in getting a job, and said it had been a "waste of time."

> *I thought about [dropping out], but I didn't. I was traveling so far and didn't think I was accomplishing anything.*

> *The classes were for only one hour or so two times a week. In the rest of the time, I felt like I was losing it, forgetting what was being taught on the nights I did go. . . you had to cram so much into the one hour classes, and I don't think that was enough time for them to fully explain things.*

There were some differences between those who went through long-term and short-term job training courses. A third of the women who completed short-term job training, said they would not do it

again. The women who enrolled in long-term courses were more positive, and only two said they would not do it again.
We asked the women who had taken part in some JTPA program to tell us what was most and least helpful to them, and to make recommendations for needed programmatic changes.

What was most helpful about the JTPA program

When asked what had been most helpful to them in the JTPA program, 58 percent answered that JTPA had provided funds for training or GED classes, 29 percent cited the help with job search skills, and 8 percent cited the encouragement of JTPA staff, or "just being there." However, 12 percent said they had not found anything about the JTPA program helpful.

Problems experienced

When those who had been through the JTPA program were asked what had been least helpful to them about the program, they pointed to problems in program structure and administration, problems with the classes themselves (run by JTPA contractors), and problems with job search assistance. Finally, many women were sharp in their criticism of the way they had been treated by the staff of the unemployment office (JTPA staff seem to have been more respectful). Only two percent said they had experienced no problems with the JTPA program.

Problems with program structure and administration: Among the problems with the JTPA administration, women pointed to the level of confusion and the sense of rush. They said they were often told "we do not know at this time" by JTPA staff, and could not get many questions answered.

> *[There was] too much confusion about school — when you can go, what you can take, how much money they will allow you.*
>
> *People had to make fast decisions, and in many cases took courses they did not really want... the JTPA reps. were pushing us to sign up for classes while there was still money available.*
>
> *We were rushed into signing up for classes because we were told that they didn't know how much money was available, and if we didn't get started we may not have funds for what was left.*
>
> *Afterward I wondered if maybe I acted too fast, took the first thing they offered. Now I would have been more interested in maybe electronics, working on more technical machines.*

No-one sat down with the women individually, looked at their work histories, their interests and skills, analyzed the local job market, and helped them develop a training path that could lead to a job. Eighty-seven percent of the women we interviewed said they had not received individual counseling on their job skills and employment and training options. Of these, 72 percent said such counseling would have been helpful.

I talked with different people from JTPA. Each one told me something different. I do not consider this counseling.

The people couldn't explain it well enough. One person would give you one answer and someone else another. The people in the office gave you wrong information.

I think they should have sat down with every one of us to show us how to better ourselves. Two years for LPN, but no way to make it the second year without a job. They said "We'll train you for Nippondenso," but out of twenty people [who applied] only one got a job.

In addition, eight percent said they wished they could have had more help with job searches.

Problems with the training program: Participants pointed out a number of problems with the training program. Perhaps the most significant were the lack of individual counseling about options, lack of clarity about the availability of funds for longer-term training, and the limited range of training options.

Only a handful of women received individual counseling from JTPA staff — most got their information about options available to them in large meetings of several hundred people. It is perhaps not surprising that 63 percent said they did not understand all of the options offered by JTPA, and 53 percent felt they had not had enough time to make a decision about the programs offered.

Through no fault of individual JTPA staff members, there was little solid information available to the women about longer-term training options. Despite the widespread acknowledgement that longer-term training may be more effective, the JTPA system is not well set-up to make it available. Most women were told their unemployment benefits would last only twenty-six weeks, and that was as long as their training could be funded. They were not informed about the possibility of extending that period if the closing was certified under the Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) as having been due to foreign competition. As result of the lack of information, some women did not enter training at all, because they wanted longer-term opportunities (like RN training, or a degree course). Others entered short-term training and received last-minute extensions when their six months were almost up.

The range of job training classes offered was limited — office skills, business computers or LPN. Although a majority of the participants said they were satisfied overall with the JTPA program, many felt they had not been offered the training which could enable them to compete for the "new jobs" of the area. More highly skilled manufacturing jobs in "high-tech" plants, other technical and paraprofessional jobs, did not come the way of these women. By the time of interview, a number of women had realized that their training had not been well-integrated with the local job market.

I don't think they offered enough. You couldn't get training enough for a job, unless someone hired you and gave you on-the-job training.

These classes were helpful, but they were not taught to the extent they should have been. One night per week was not enough time to fully understand and remember what was taught from one week to the next. You cannot call a ten-week course a retraining program.

Not all of the school was a waste of time, but the money could have been better spent on a long-term degree program.

I thought these would be refresher courses in basic skills and lead up to Industrial Management. I also thought the Governor of Tennessee had volunteered Pellissippi State [Community College] to train us for new jobs coming in to Blount County. Also, that they would help us with getting applications [for jobs]. I also thought this course would apply to a degree program. All we got was a lot of books and a certificate for a software program.

They should have started with basic computer, instead of starting us out as if we knew about it already. The class moved too fast. I don't feel I learned anything in that class to help me. . . I thought that if all the classes they were offering were like the one at Pellissippi State I took, which did not do me any good, why should I waste my time trying to take any other classes that would not do me any good. I don't feel I should put on an application that I had computer training when I don't know anything at all about it. I didn't learn anything about the computer that I can remember to do.

Eleven percent felt that their teachers were not qualified, and could not control the class. Eight percent felt the classes were too short.

It is not surprising that a number of the women felt that the "training" they had received was not enough to enable them to move into a different career. Our study suggests that the JTPA retraining program failed most of the women in several ways. The courses offered were conventionally gender-defined: office skills, health-care, computer use, most of them leading to jobs lower-paying than their old jobs. The training courses offered these women were short-term, usually ten weeks, and were not enough to enable the women to make major job changes. Only a few were able to take longer-term training. Only three people received on-the-job training, all at a hospital.

Problems with job search assistance: Although some people praised JTPA's assistance with job search skills, we should note that JTPA apparently did little to actually assist people in finding jobs. Of the 70 women who had held a job since the plant closing, only four women said they found it through JTPA assistance, none through the unemployment office, and three women had found a job through the school or community college with which they trained. Most women found their first job on their own: 47 percent through family or friends, 16 percent went on their own on a round of employers and 11 percent found jobs through the newspaper.

If they had sent us a letter telling us where to go to hunt for a job with the qualifications we got from our courses it would have helped.

They told us they would help us get a job — but didn't.

Forty-eight percent of the JTPA participants said they did not receive job market information from JTPA, although 75 percent said the job market information would have been helpful. However, it is not clear that JTPA had such job market information to give to program participants. Certainly, their job training options do not appear to have been closely matched to the picture of the job market painted by Tennessee Department of Employment Security data. Without a job market survey on which to base training options, the program may not have trained women for the largest growth sectors in the local economy.

Even with all the schooling I have had since the plant closed, I was told by an employee at the employment office that I had better get it out of my head that I could go to work for one of the [new] companies coming in [to Blount County]. I had better go ahead and take a minimum wage job, or one with less than 40 hours a week. I feel I was being discriminated against because I am a white female aged 50.

Some women felt some pressure from JTPA to take a job, any job, so that they could be deemed "placed."

I know they pressured lots of people to take any job just to say they had placed you. That wasn't what I was interested in.

They rode you about taking any job so it would look good on them.

Unemployment office blues: Although we did not ask questions about staff, many of the unsolicited comments made during interviews concerned the way women were treated by staff of the Department of Employment Security, the local unemployment office. At a time when these women most needed support and encouragement, when their identity and independence were threatened, when they were scared about a future without a secure job, when they were grieving for the "family" of the workplace and in shock, many of them felt they were treated with contempt.

The unemployment people acted like it was our fault we were out of work. They acted like we were dirt.

I got the impression from the people at the unemployment office that they were paying us out of their own pockets... I just dreaded going.

The unemployment office acted like we closed the plant to spite them.

These women had been good workers, they had long tenure in their jobs, had been making good production and good pay. They had all of the "work ethic" valued by employers, even if they lacked certain skills. They were shocked to find themselves unemployed at all, and to be treated so rudely added insult to injury.

Not all were so insensitive. JTPA staff members in particular seem to have been at least more respectful, even if the information they had to offer was often confused. There are stories of individuals who made a significant difference.

> *I never was so humiliated and talked down to in my life at the very first. But after that they were nicer. At one point I was so depressed I thought I'd never find a job. I had gone about as far as I felt like I could. I told Mr. _____ [JTPA staff] that he would have to do something, I didn't know if I was going to make it or not. He was worried about me and called me at home to check on me.*

Suggestions for program changes

Many women had specific recommendations for ways the JTPA program could be changed to meet the needs of people like themselves. They had recommendations for procedural or operational changes, for staffing changes, and for program content changes. Only seven people said they would not make any changes to the JTPA program. One woman who said she suffered from depression, had lost her apartment and truck because of financial problems, had attended a community college with TRA funding, had a very clear overall vision of what the JTPA program should be doing:

> *Better our skills to meet the demand of the changing times and changing job market. Stable companies that pay well and have vacation benefits don't want to give a woman a chance. They need to find out about more and better paying jobs and schooling for them, instead of just getting someone into a low paying job. They are not living up to their name of Job Training Partnership.*

Operational changes: Thirty three percent (17 women) of those who participated in the JTPA program made recommendations in this area. They ranged from allowing more time to make decisions, more fairness (offering the same opportunities to all), providing more individual counseling, and developing a better system for relaying information and keeping records.

> *When you are dealing with large numbers of people, it makes it hard for JTPA and the unemployment office to do a good job for a worker. They should wait about a month after the plant closed, and see all the people in small groups away from the plant site. You need time to let feelings die down, time to think about what to do next.*

> *Time was not the question. If someone had sit down and explained about the program, we could have made a decision, not just get into class.*

Do classes in small groups, away from job site. Listen to what people really want. If they need more help to give us good service, then they should hire more staff.

Staffing changes: Six women (11 percent) made recommendations for staffing changes. They suggest staff who are better trained on what displaced workers are feeling, and so better able to care and be helpful.

Need staff who really cares that you're hurting.

Staff should know how to understand people who are in pain.

Try to understand how confused we were—be more patient with our questions.

They also suggest that staff should stay in touch with people while they are in training. More staff should be hired if necessary to do a good job.

Staff should go to the school every so often, meet with students, allow them to talk about school, problems, ask questions, act like we are still alive.

Program changes: Twenty women (38 percent) made recommendations for programmatic changes, including more on-the-job training, more one-on-one counseling, longer job training classes, a better job placement program after training, and courses more relevant to the local job market. In particular, many women would like to see a much closer link between their training and actual jobs.

Should take an active interest by finding companies that would be interested in having trained ex-Company workers, then send us to school to take what training that company needed. Match school and available jobs together.

JTPA should ask all local schools to talk to small groups of displaced workers to explain their school: their types of training, what the training can do for you, what jobs are available to you with this training, the wages, and so on. Then you could make a more adult decision on what kind of school you need.

As earlier comments show, several believed that the short-term training they were offered was not enough, and that longer-term and/or on-the-job training would have been much more useful. They also wanted to see more individual counseling of workers, to help them make decisions about the best kind of training for them to take.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our study answers some of the questions with which we started, and raises some new questions. Some of the findings were what we had expected. Some were unexpected. Perhaps the most surprising finding to us was how little difference job training made to the women's subsequent employment experience. It apparently did not make a difference to their ability to get a job, made only slight difference to the wage gap between their last job with The Company and the first job after the plant closed, and made a difference in job satisfaction for only some women.

Training does seem to have opened a wider range of job options for women, but since most of these were "women's work," which is low-paying with few benefits, it is hard to say that they are better jobs. However, we took a relatively short-term view of employment, only the first twenty months after the plant closed. It is possible that over a longer time period, those who trained will be able to close the wage gap further, and possibly be in more stable employment fields than manufacturing, which will pay off in the long term.

The findings of our study, and the insights of the respondents and of our Advisory Committee, lead us to a number of recommendations for programmatic change within JTPA. Some of these could be implemented relatively easily with little additional funding. Others would require more fundamental re-structuring, but along lines which are already being debated among Department of Labor and congressional leadership.

Women's perceptions of the options

Our study found that women were fairly realistic in their perceptions of jobs available to them in the area without training, but somewhat less so in their perceptions of jobs available with training. Whether their perceptions of jobs available with training were shaped by what was offered by JTPA, or whether both were shaped by prevailing assumptions about gender-typing, we do not know. We do know that *both* women's perceptions and JTPA training offerings directed women toward traditionally low-paying "women's work" — in offices, hospitals, services and factories. The local job market did offer other potentials for women, but these were not the focus of JTPA training opportunities, and were not perceived by many women.

> **Recommendation # 1: JTPA should encourage women to plan training strategies based on the local job market and their personal aptitudes, rather than what is considered to be "appropriate" work for women. Training strategies could have been directed toward projected growth occupations in technical and paraprofessional fields and in sales, rather than the low-paying clerical and health service jobs.**

The women we interviewed, whether or not they took the training options, did expect training to be valuable in getting another job. Over time, disillusion set in for some of the women who trained, but had difficulty getting a good job. They came to perceive the local job market as having few opportunities for them, or their training as inadequate for the kinds of jobs they wanted. Women who did not train continued to blame themselves and their lack of training for whatever problems they encountered in getting a job.

We found that a large majority of women said they did not understand the options offered them by JTPA. They cited the confusion and the stress of the closing itself, the conflicting information they were given, the large groups in which they met with JTPA personnel, the speed with which they had to make decisions about taking training opportunities, and the absence of individual counseling.

> **Recommendation 2: Individual counseling is needed for women to make good decisions about training opportunities, based on the local availability of jobs related to the training, the everyday realities of those jobs, and their own individual skills, aptitudes and experience.**

Making choices/Barriers to retraining

Even when options were perceived and understood, barriers existed for many women to taking training for new jobs. The most significant barrier was the necessity of getting another job immedi-

ately, to maintain family income or health insurance. We found that the women with lower total household incomes were much less likely to retrain.

Recommendation 3: JTPA should look for creative ways to assure displaced workers of income support over a long enough period, and at an adequate level, to enable them to undertake substantive retraining programs.

Earlier plant closing studies have shown that displaced workers commonly experience longer periods of unemployment and a greater drop in wages when they do find employment than do regular unemployed workers. Finding ways of providing transitional support for displaced workers beyond the span of unemployment pay is important. While the Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) did provide additional funds for retraining, it was almost nine months before it was determined that these workers were eligible. By then, many women who said they might have taken substantial longer-term training (commonly in nursing) if they had know long-term funding would be available, had returned to the job market. Some had no training, others took only short-term courses which did not make much difference to their subsequent jobs.

Just as the JOBS program now offers income and benefits support to AFDC recipients as they enter the workforce, so JTPA should consider similar support for displaced workers as they retrain for new jobs. This support needs to be clearly explained from the beginning, so that women can make their decisions.

Recommendation 4: Affordable health insurance should be offered to women who are receiving unemployment benefits and are enrolled in training. This would both remove a barrier and be a significant incentive for more women to retrain.

While most of the women in our study did not find childcare a barrier to taking training, a younger female workforce would likely find this a significant barrier (mainly because of cost, since they already had childcare arrangements in place while working). Age was a significant factor for the women in our survey. Many perceived they were too old for retraining, and many of those in their fifties felt they were discriminated against in the job market. At a time when older workers with a good track record of productive employment and a strong ethic are increasingly being appreciated by employers, older women need extra encouragement to take training and extra support in finding employment.

A substantial number of women in our study had not graduated high school or achieved a GED when the plant closed. Although JTPA is to be commended for enabling many of these to enroll in GED classes, the structure of the program made education a barrier to job retraining. Because women had to have a GED before they could enroll in job training, and because the time in which income support would be available was limited, most women did not make it over the GED hurdle into job training. Only 28 percent of women with less than 12th grade education were able to take job training, many fewer than their high school graduate co-workers.

There are other models now being developed, which integrate basic skills remediation with job training. Evaluations of such integrated program suggests that they are very successful with minority welfare mothers. We might expect a similar integrated approach to be successful also with displaced workers who need basic skills remediation. Integrating the two on an intensive basis would provide women with a sense of purpose and achievement, and probably with faster skill gains.

> **Recommendation 5: GED preparation should be integrated with job skill training, and provided on an intensive basis, so that lack of basic skills is not a barrier to job training.**

Training and jobs

We expected to find that training made a greater difference than it did in the women's employment experience subsequent to the plant closing. In the time period we studied, up to twenty months after the plant closed, training did not make a difference to whether or not they had a full-time job, it did not make a statistically significantly difference in wage level of the first job after the plant closed, and it did not make a major difference in satisfaction with the first job after the plant closed.

While training per se was not significant in affecting most aspects of employment, we did find that those who had enrolled in longer-term training courses did experience more job satisfaction, were more likely to get a job related to their training, and expressed greater overall satisfaction with the JTPA program. The kind of retraining that enables people to move into new fields of work, and at a comparable wage to their former work, requires longer training courses than the ten-week programs which were most common in our study.

> **Recommendation # 6: More longer-term training should be offered to displaced workers, along with counseling about ongoing financial aid for those who wish to continue in school beyond the period covered by unemployment pay.**

Job training did open up a wider range of job options for the women in our study, but most of them were low-wage. A substantial number of women did not end up in jobs for which they had taken training. The women in our study and on our Advisory Committee suggested several possible reasons for this: that the training was not geared to jobs which were actually available in the local job market; that women had chosen training courses without having a realistic sense of what jobs were like in that field; and that placement assistance for jobs at the end of training was inadequate. Whatever the reason, retraining appears to be a wasted effort when it does not result in jobs in a new field.

> **Recommendation # 7: JTPA is already evaluated on its placement record; we suggest that programs should be evaluated on the basis of placement in jobs for which participants have been trained.**

A large majority of women in our study lost wages when we compared the hourly wage in their first job after the plant closed with their last wage with The Company. We expected this, since other plant closing studies have shown that displaced workers commonly lose wages. Many women ended up with close to minimum wage levels (14 percent earned less than $4.00 per hour, and 42 percent less than $5.00 per hour). What was more surprising to us was that those who enrolled in GED classes, most of whom stayed in manufacturing jobs, were more able to maintain their wages than those who went into job training and switched out of manufacturing.

This is an area in which further follow-up with our group of women is needed. It is possible that those who trained and switched careers did worse in the short-term, since they started at the bottom in their new career, but would be able to increase wages over time as they build up seniority in their new jobs. Only a longer perspective on their employment experience can show this. However, we should note that most of the jobs for which they were trained do pay less than manufacturing jobs in the area (because they are gender-related). The promotion ladder for clerical workers is quite short. Even a senior secretary may not be able to better the wages of faster production workers.

> **Recommendation # 8: We propose that JTPA should also be evaluated on the wage levels of the placements made. Training which leads to close to minimum wage jobs may not be a good investment of the women's time, or government funds.**

While the women who trained were more likely to express job satisfaction than did the women who did not train, the differences were not large. Some women suggested to us that if they had had a better sense of the reality of their new jobs, they would not have taken the training for them. In particular, the switch from factory work to office work was hard for some women. This reinforces the recommendation that individual counseling is a vital component of a successful retraining and placement program.

Overall evaluation

The most important service provided by JTPA for the women in our study was the training, including job transition classes, GED classes and job training classes. Job search assistance does not appear to have been an important component of the services provided to this group of women, and most people found their jobs on their own. Finding a job after completing training was not always easy, and a number of women would have liked more help.

> **Recommendation # 9: JTPA needs to provide more help with job searches, especially after the training is completed.**

Most women appreciated the opportunity to go back to school, even when they had problems with aspects of the program. They believed that training would help them get a job, and often valued it for their own personal development. Some, especially those who had taken LPN training, loved their new job, and could not have achieved it without the training.

However, many women pointed out a variety of problems with the way the JTPA program served them, and enough mentioned staffing problems among unemployment insurance staff to convince us that reforms are needed.

> **Recommendation # 10: All unemployment office staff who come into contact with displaced workers should have training, incentives and supervision geared to better public relations. We suggest: mandatory training in dealing with the public; evaluation of individual staff members on the basis of customer satisfaction; an incentive system to reward good public relations; closer supervision of staff who have contact with the public.**

Another problem area concerns the staffing of JTPA contractors for the job training. A number of women pointed to problems with the teachers of the classes, particularly that they seemed unable to gear their teaching to the level and experience of the displaced workers. Our Advisory Committee suggests that many of these teachers were used to dealing with high school and college-age young people, not older women, and that they need an orientation to the differences in teaching adults and young people. This could be provided by local Adult Basic Education program staff, who are experienced in working with adults, and provide training for their own ABE teachers.

> **Recommendation # 11: All JTPA contractors should provide training in principles of adult education for all teachers of displaced workers.**

Finally, we cannot ignore the personal distress which so many women felt at the time the plant closed, and continued to feel for many months afterward. We found many people describing increased personal and family problems, some health-related, some related to the stress of no job and reduced income. Many said that personal counseling would have been important to them, if provided at low cost or free, on an individual, private and confidential basis.

> **Recommendation # 12: Community mental health agencies should be made more aware of the problems of displaced workers, and the fact that their problems are not always quickly resolved. Such agencies should be encouraged to offer affordable, private counseling for a considerable period of time after the plant closing.**

Conclusions

The position of working class women in the South is problematic today. Although their middle class sisters have been able to move up career ladders, working class women are losing their major source of "good" jobs (that is, full-time, more than minimum wage, with benefits). As manufacturing jobs decline, women and men are looking to the service sector. But women who have long years in semi-skilled manufacturing jobs are finding that the higher wage service jobs are not open to them because they do not have the requisite skills. The service jobs which are open to these women have traditionally been defined as "women's work" — jobs in offices, food

services, hospitals, childcare. Many of the jobs are part-time, carry few benefits and low wages.

Training could be a solution to this dilemma. By offering women who have been displaced from the manufacturing sector the opportunity to gain new skills, JTPA could enable them to move either into the more highly skilled manufacturing jobs which remain, or into higher-skilled service jobs.

The transition would not be easy. It would need a training program targeted to higher-skill opportunities in the local job market, and geared to women's needs for support services. The training would likely have to be longer-term as the skills gap is large.

The training program experienced by the women in our study appears to be none of the above. It targeted low-wage "women's work," and does not appear to have been closely related to the local job market. It failed to provide support services of childcare, transportation and counseling. There were few opportunities for long-term retraining.

The women we interviewed were well aware of the problems they faced. They articulated well the kinds of programmatic changes that would meet their needs. If the "partnership" of the job Training Partnership Act were to be extended to the workers involved, the program could be much improved. As they told us, the women in our survey were not "quitters." They had worked hard all their lives, they were perceptive and eager to make changes. They would have been better served by a program which treated them as valued partners, provided better information (about the job market, about future opportunities), more options (for different kinds and lengths of training programs), and better support (individual counseling, longer-term income support and health insurance coverage).

FOOTNOTES

1. The JTPA program overall included both short-term "job transition" classes, job skill training classes, and GED or basic skills classes. Very few on-the-job training opportunities were offered. In this report, we use "training" as a generic term to include all components offered by JTPA; and distinguish when necessary "job training" and "GED" as the major sub-sets.

2. Merrifield, Juliet and Lemonds, Michael (1989), An Even Chance: Education, Community and Work in Tennessee. Knoxville, Tennessee: Center for Literacy Studies, The University of Tennessee, p. 10.

3. New York Times, 6/26/89.

4. Knoxville News-Sentinel, 10/9/88.

5. We would expect that substantial numbers of the workers had not graduated from high school. Forty-three percent of all adults in Blount County were without a high school diploma or GED in the 1980 Census. In Tennessee as a whole, 58 percent of women textile sewing machine operators lacked a high school diploma in 1980.

6. General Accounting Office (GAO), U.S. (1986), Dislocated workers: Extent of business closures, layoffs and the public and private response, (Report No. GAO/HRD-86-116BR). Gaithersburg, MD: U.S. General Accounting Office.

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APPENDIX:

CORRELATIONS TABLE

	Worry	Empstat	J1Like	Excite	Problems	Child	Toolong	Wageloss	Sevtrain	Leviyrs	Educ	P1Comp	Age	School	Scared	Nofriend	Memory	Whoknow	Old	Incomb	Houseinc	Depchild	Marital	Time	Options	TRGED	GED
Train	**-.183*** **	.040	**.220*** **	**.314+**	.107	-.140	**-.279***	-.114	.142	.152	.045	.220	-.029	-.004	.136	**-.267***	**-.183*** **	-.066	**-.215** **	**.194*** **	-.060	**-.167*** **	-.007	-.072	**-.234** **	**.816+**	.116
GED	-.108	.147	.037	.085	-.029	-.037	.095	-.026	.230	**.174*** **	**-.427+**	.113	.039	**.320+**	**.301***	-.032	**-.195** **	**.197** **	**-.226** **	-.087	-.236	-.033	.062	.002	.007	**.503*** **	
TRGED	**-.183*** **	.106	**.252** **	.353+	.126	-.073	-.131	-.186	.142	.132	-.144	.220	-.035	**.206** **	**.239** **	**-.306***	**-.236** **	-.001	**-.260***	.066	-.060	-.150	.040	-.071	**-.238** **			
Options	-.021	.042	-.087	**-.222** **	-.154	-.039	**.309***	.165	.003	-.111	-.094	-.179	-.011	.091	-.037	**.273***	-.119	-.015	**.229** **	.079	.332	.023	.029	.398*				
Time	-.095	.254*	.079	-.140	-.211**	-.321**	.078	-.056	-.167	.063	-.030	-.151	.068	.069	.108	.172	.031	-.129	.115	.042	.182	-.025	.003					
Marital	-.063	-.022	-.187	.033	.045	**.022**	.074	.109	-.176	.059	-.007	.005	-.099	.059	.064	.032	.051	-.136	-.012	**.653+**	.	.089						
Depchild	-.062	**-.200** **	0.141	**.171*** **	.144	.	-.056	.137	-.007	-.183***	**.347+**	-.164	**-.470+**	.021	**-.219** **	-.040	-.027	-.158	**-.231** **	.001	**.426*** **						
Houseinc	-.016	.358	-.341	.062	-.189	.	-.305	.347	.447	.171	.008	-.218	.106	-.305	**-.474** **	-.272	.236	**-.400*** **	-.290	.301							
Incombef	-.157	-.006	**-.301***	.038	-.057	-.190	-.017	.170	-.205	**.237** **	.051	-.165	.038	-.052	-.001	-.050	.075	-.109	.049								
Old	.124	-.031	-.046	**-.490+**	**-.168*** **	-.245***	.208**	.100	-.260***	.046	-.152	-.176	**.361+**	**.195*** **	.047	**.233** **	-.023	.034									
Whoknow	.047	-.067	.046	-.100	.019	**.151**	**-.003**	-.017	.222	-.112	.105	.108	.058	.092	-.035	**.196*** **	-.010										
Memory	-.013	-.030	-.384+	.050	.005	-.051	-.195***	-.053	-.176	.052	.072	.102	.139	**-.410+**	-.127	.015											
Nofriend	**.299***	.011	-.189	**-.187*** **	.005	.013	**.237** **	.234***	.195	-.066	.015	.210	.147	.177	.076												
Scared	.017	.035	.044	-.042	-.014	-.077	**.150**	**-.206*** **	.100	.115	**-.305***	.194	.024	**.170*** **													
School	.033	.071	.189	-.015	-.078	.138	.231**	**.118**	.021	-.052	**-.249***	.186	.023														
Age	.047	.173***	-.192	**-.246***	-.076	-.203	**.023**	.212***	.026	**.636+**	**-.345+**	**.377***															
P1Comp	**.445***	.166	-.115	.033	.088	.178	.083	**-.086**	.326**	**.308** **	-.295***																
Educ	-.015	-.175***	.178	.098	.015	.164	-.231**	-.052	**-.087**	-.230**																	
Leviyrs	-.081	.162	-.230**	-.030	-.076	-.127	**-.108**	.265**	.127																		
Sevtrain	.239	.271***	-.070	.006	.057	-.220	.134	**.384** **																			
Wageloss	-.107	.279*	-.429+	-.064	.163	.059	-.054																				
Toolong	**.231** **	.137	-.135	**-.210** **	.109	.196																					
Child	.076	-.012	.158	.065	.113																						
Problems	.133	.018	-.193	**.222** **																							
Excite	-.138	.076	**.199*** **																								
J1Like	-.162	-.020																									
Empstat	-.003																										
Worry																											

+ ≤ .001
* ≤ .01
** ≤ .05
*** ≤ .10